

.. The ..
ARABIAN NIGHTS



Illustrated by H. G. THEAKER



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MORGIANA, ALI BABA, AND COGIA HASSAN

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

RE-TOLD BY
ROSE YEATMAN WOOLF





COGIA HASSAN
(From "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves")

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

(SELECTED STORIES)

RE-TOLD BY
ROSE YEATMAN WOOLF

Illustrated by
HARRY G. THEAKER
and others



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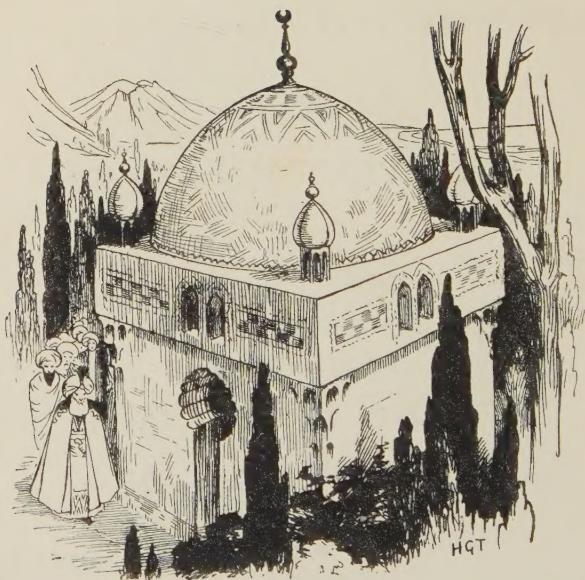
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"THE MARBLE MAUSOLEUM"
(From "Codadad and his Brothers")



"THE SURGEON WAS RICHLY REWARDED"
(From "Codadad and his Brothers")

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SCHEHERAZADE AND THE SULTAN

A SULTAN of India named Schah-riar was deceived by his Queen, and after he had her put to death, he determined that no woman should ever again have the opportunity of imposing upon him. In order to be certain of this, and yet avoid the loneliness of single life, he married a new wife each day, and always had her executed the following morning.

Consternation spread over the land, for the fairest and best damsels were sacrificed to the monarch's cruel whim. Every father and mother

dwelt in fear and trembling lest their daughter should be selected as the next victim ; and Schah-riar was loathed by his once loyal subjects.

At this juncture Scheherazade, the virtuous and beautiful daughter of the Grand Vizier, came to her father and entreated him to offer her to the Sultan for his bride. The Vizier thought she must assuredly have taken leave of her senses.

Scheherazade however persisted in her idea, and confided to her parent that she had made a plan whereby she hoped to win the goodwill of the Sultan, and put an end to his folly.

The Sultan consented to accept Scheherazade as his bride for a day, and the Vizier returned to his daughter and tearfully related the success of his mission.

She then called Dinarzade, her younger sister, aside and said, " It is my purpose to entreat the Sultan to permit me to spend the last night of my life in thy company. An he grants my supplication, do thou lay thee down near the couch where I recline beside the Sultan, and before the day dawns ask me to relate one of the tales I have been wont to tell thee."

Dinarzade gladly acceded to her sister's request, and the Sultan's permission having been

obtained, she spent the night at the foot of the couch whereon her sister and Schah-riar reposed.

Ere the day dawned, Dinarzade awakened her sister, "O sister mine, I pray thee recount me one of thy delectable stories; never again shall I have the joy of hearing aught so delightful." Instead of replying to Dinarzade, Scheherazade requested the Sultan's leave to indulge her sister's wish. Schah-riar assented and listened enthralled to the tale his bride narrated.

When, at sunrise, the monarch was obliged to go about his affairs, he could by no means make up his mind to have Scheherazade executed, and thus lose the remainder of the tale.

So for a thousand and one nights did Scheherazade relate one tale after another, and the Sultan meanwhile learnt to love and trust the sweet recounter. He thereupon renounced his cruel vow, and taking Scheherazade to his heart, made her the most happy and contented of women.

The stories that follow, are a selection from those related by Scheherazade to the Sultan Schah-riar and her sister Dinarzade.



"SHE WAS LIFTED, BED AND ALL"

ALADDIN AND THE WONDERFUL LAMP

ONCE on a time a poor widow dwelt in the city called Al-Kalás in China. She was a spinner of cotton yarn, and toiled from dawn to dusk to earn the wherewithal to buy bread for herself and her son Aladdin.

Aladdin was a merry lad and ever foremost in the games he played with his comrades of the mean street where they lived ; none ever guessed, himself least of all, that he had been born under a lucky star and was reserved for a great destiny. But far away in Morocco there was a certain

Moor, a Sorcerer, who discovered by his magic that this boy, the son of a poor tailor, had been elected heir to a great treasure.

This treasure belonged to the Jann (a tribe of giants dwelling in the under-world) and lay concealed in a subterranean cave.

Now the Sorcerer, on account of his great learning in magic, was well aware that none might enter the Cave save he whom the Jann had decreed. He nevertheless determined to possess himself, by some means or other, of the Wonderful Lamp which was the most precious thing in the secret hoard, bestowing power on its holder over all the Treasure and giving command of the Slaves of the Lamp. To effect his purpose the Moor had to journey over land and sea, a weary way, until he came to Al-Kalás, near which city the Cave was situate. There he sought out Aladdin's mother, and, under pretence of being brother to her dead husband, soon won her confidence and the boy's affection—for they were simple folk and easily beguiled.

And it came to pass that on a certain day the Magician and the boy fared forth together to see the beauties of the city. Hand in hand they wandered on past palaces and pleasure places in lordly gardens, by fountains and pavilions, one

finer than another, until they reached the barren country beyond the walls.

Aladdin had grown weary and begged the Magician to turn homewards ; but the latter urged him on, crying, " O son of my brother, this day I will show thee a sight thou never sawest in all thy life."

At last they came to the spot for which the Sorcerer had all the while been seeking, and he forthwith fell to making incantations and weaving spells so that the very ground commenced to quake and presently it sprung apart with a mighty noise. Aladdin was sore affrighted ; but the old man dragged him to the spot where the ground in opening laid bare a slab with a ring in the centre.

" Pull, O my Lad," said the Magician, " and fear not ; do but my bidding and thou shalt see many marvels and possess riches so great that kings shall envy thee."

Aladdin laid hold of the ring, pulled as he had been directed, and the slab in swinging back revealed a stairway leading underground.

" Descend, my son," quoth the Magician, " but take heed to do my bidding. Below in the Cave are four halls full of gold and silver ; touch nothing there, but pass through to the garden where the trees bear rare and strange fruit. There thou wilt

see a copper Lamp hanging in an alcove ; extinguish the light, take the Lamp and place it securely in thy pocket. Then thou mayest refresh thyself with the fruit of which I told thee, and so long as thou obeyest me this Ring will save thee from danger," saying which the Magician drew off his signet ring and placed it on Aladdin's finger.

Aladdin thereupon descended the stairway, and, passing through the halls to the garden, took no leisure to look about him, until the lamp was secure in his pocket.

He now paused to admire the garden wherein every tree was hung with sparkling gems of great size and every hue, so that the eye was dazzled by their brightness. Aladdin, thinking the gems were fruit, plucked some and was disappointed—being but a little lad—that he could not eat them. "Alack!" said he, "they are naught but glass." However, the sparkle of the gems being pleasing to him, he filled his pockets and gathered as many as he could carry in his arms.

He reached the stairway thus heavily laden, and finding he could not climb the last step, which was a very steep one, called to the Magician, "O my uncle, I pray thee aid me over this step."

"Hand me the Lamp first," came the reply.

“ Indeed I cannot reach it,” rejoined the boy ;
“ do but help me and I shall give it thee after.”

The Sorcerer, thinking it withheld by design, flew into a great rage, and being a man of hasty temper and unreasonable, he commenced to storm and rage and make magic passes so that the slab closed down and Aladdin was imprisoned in the Cave.

“ Ho, thou son of a tailor,” he cried, “ if I cannot enjoy the Lamp, neither shalt thou ; stay there till thou starvest.”

So it came to pass that the Magician wended his way back to Africa, poor and disappointed, having lost, through his own folly, that which he had been to so much pains to gain.

Aladdin, finding himself shut into the dark passage of the Cave, ran hither and thither, but could find no way out ; all the doors were fast locked behind him by the sorcery of the Magician.

In dire straits the poor lad cried to “ Allah the Merciful ” to save him, and as he folded his hands in prayer he chanced to rub the Magician’s ring. Immediately a strange and terrible form stood before him, and said, “ Here am I ; thy Slave between thy hands is come ; ask whatsoe’er thou desirest, for I am the Slave of him who wears the Ring.”

Aladdin was greatly alarmed at the apparition, but, encouraged by the words, begged the Slave to set him upon the earth.

As soon as he uttered the request the ground opened and Aladdin, finding himself close under the city walls, made his way home at his best speed.

Three days and nights had been passed in the Cave, and Aladdin's mother lamented and mourned, fearing she would never again find her son. How great was the joy when the widow once more embraced the boy, and how gladly she brought him every morsel of food she could find! As soon as he had eaten, the boy related of his adventure with many maledictions on the cruel Sorcerer.

Next day there was neither bite nor sup in the house, and, hunger sharpening his wits, Aladdin bethought himself to sell the Lamp he brought from the Cave.

"Perhaps it would fetch more if it were cleaner," said the widow, so she brought some sand and commenced to rub the Lamp.

In a twinkling a huge and terrible-looking Genie stood before her, demanding, "What wilt thou of me? Here am I, the Slave to whomsoever holdeth the Lamp, to obey all behests, I and the other slaves of the Lamp."

The widow on beholding the Genie gave a shriek and fell swooning to the floor.

Aladdin, with great presence of mind, rushed forward and snatched up the Lamp, crying, "O slave of the Lamp, I am sore a-hungered, bring me somewhat choice to eat."

In a flash the Genie placed a splendid silver tray before him, set out with the choicest viands on a dozen golden platters, and there were flagons of wine and crystal goblets.

The Genie disappeared, and the widow soon recovered when the odour of roast meats filled the room.

What a feast it was ! not even the Sultan had such snowy-white bread or sparkling wines ; but all good things come to an end, and at last the food was all eaten, and Hunger once more became the unwelcome guest in that humble home.

The splendid platters were sold, one by one, and being ignorant of their value, Aladdin was finely cheated by the merchant who bought the goods.

When all the dishes were thus disposed of, Aladdin rubbed his lamp, and the Genie again stood before him ; and as promptly obeyed the order to bring a tray of food similar to the previous one.

Again Plenty reigned, and the widow and her son feasted until all the food was gone.

Aladdin now learnt to sell his platters to such good advantage that they enabled him to support himself and his parent in frugal comfort for several years.

So the boy grew into a man who had daily increased in knowledge and experience by intercourse with the Merchants and Jewellers in the Bazaars. From the latter he learnt the value of gems, and thus came to know how rare those were which he had gathered in the Enchanted Garden.

One auspicious day it was proclaimed by the Crier in the Market Place that the Sultan's daughter, the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor, would even then repair to the Hammam, so all folk were commanded to retire to their houses and steal no glimpse at her. Whoso should disobey this mandate would suffer death.

Now Aladdin, who had from time to time heard much talk of the beauty of the Princess, was seized with an invincible curiosity to behold her. To this end he concealed himself behind the door of the Hammam, and by good fortune the lady raised her veil as she entered, thus enabling him to gaze upon her through a chink.

Verily a lovely vision greeted those prying

eyes, for Buddir-al-Buddoor had skin like a magnolia petal kissed by the setting sun, and her eyes were as starlight on a deep, dark lake.

Aladdin's whole being was overwhelmed with love for the Princess, and he walked home like one in a dream.

Sleep forsook him, and not even the most toothsome morsels could tempt his appetite. His mother was as one distracted to witness such trouble, and presently her solicitude drew from him the confession of the affection he had conceived for the Princess.

"O my mother, I beseech thee, entreat the Sultan to accept me as suitor for the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor," he supplicated.

"Now surely thou art as one without sense," replied his parent; "thinkest thou the Sultan desireth such an one as thou for his son-in-law? Nay, sooner will he put both thee and me to death."

But the widow's words and entreaties failed to turn the young man from his purpose; and at last, fearing that he might die for very chagrin, she consented, albeit most unwillingly, to carry his petition to the Sultan.

She prepared for the unwelcome task, and then bethought herself that she lacked means to buy

the gift, which it was customary to offer when seeking audience at the Palace.

“O my Son,” said she, “how can I go before the Sultan having no gift to offer him? surely it is not seemly that I stand there empty-handed.”

Thereupon Aladdin comforted her and said, “O my dear Mother—thy gift shall surpass all others in splendour.”

He then gave her the gems from the Enchanted Garden, and when they were arranged in a china bowl the light of them dazzled the eyes.

The widow tied the bowl in a kerchief, and departing on her errand entered the great hall of the Palace without let or hindrance, for the Sultan, in his benignity, gave audience thrice weekly to all who came to plead a cause or claim justice.

The poor woman placed herself opposite the Throne and waited throughout the time that the Divan (*levée*) was held, without finding courage to make her petition.

She attended several *levées* in this manner until at length the Sultan noted her and called to his Grand Vizier to lead her before the Throne.

“O Woman,” said the Sultan, “what business brings thee here?”

The widow bowed till her forehead touched

the ground, and proffered her request with fear and trembling.

When she had said her say she waited meekly for the death sentence that she most surely expected ; instead of which the Sultan burst into laughter and replied, “ O Woman, I have a curiosity to know what is in that kerchief that thou holdest so fast.”

She opened the bundle and offered the bowl wherein the gems glittered like the sunshine.

The Sultan could not contain his joy at this fine gift ; never had he seen the equal of even the least of the jewels. The Grand Vizier who stood beside him echoed the words of praise and wonder, until his royal master cried, “ Verily whoso valueth my daughter at such a price surely meriteth her in marriage,” which greatly alarmed him, for the Princess had been promised for his son.

“ O King of the Age,” he pleaded, “ decide not this matter so hastily ; deign but to grant three months’ delay so that my son may procure a far costlier gift.”

The Sultan hearkened to the Vizier’s request ; but he knew full well that nowhere in the world could anything be found to surpass these gems.

He therefore bade the widow return to her son and tell him that he must take patience for three

months, after which he could claim the Princess for his bride. He thereupon dismissed the matter and soon forgot all about it.

Great was Aladdin's joy at the tidings his mother brought him ; he thanked Heaven with all his heart and settled down to await the time when the Sultan would fulfil his promise.

Two months of the allotted time had passed, when one evening the widow, finding herself short of oil, fared forth to purchase some. When she came to the market-place she was surprised to observe that all the shops and houses were decorated with flowers and tapers, and there was a great going to and fro of soldiers and officials in fine uniforms.

She enquired of the oilman the reason of this display, to which he replied, " O Woman, art thou a stranger and not of this city that thou knowest not the Princess Buddir-al-Buddoor will wed the Vizier's son to-night ? Even now the bridegroom goeth from the Hammam to the Palace."

The widow went home weeping, and imparted the bad news to her son. " Verily," she sobbed, " the Sultan hath broken his word to thee, my boy."

Aladdin was distraught at her words, until he

remembered the Wonderful Lamp. He at once regained his good spirits, ate his supper with appetite, and when the meal was finished retired to his chamber to summon the Genie.

The giant appeared immediately and said :
“ Ask what thou wilt of me, I am thy Slave, I and all the Slaves of the Lamp.”

“ O Slave of the Lamp,” Aladdin answered,
“ an it were feasible, I fain would hold converse with the Princess ere she sleeps to-night. Canst thou bring her to me ? ”

“ To hear is to obey,” said the Genie, and he hastened away to carry out his master’s behest.

Wherefore it came to pass that as the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor lay upon her couch that night, she was lifted bed and all and carried by invisible hands to Aladdin’s chamber.

Meanwhile the Vizier’s son was seized by one of the Janns and  confined in a dark, foul cupboard, where he passed a night of great discomfort.

The Princess, half dead from fright, had perforce to listen to Aladdin whilst he recounted the story of her father’s perfidy to him. She made no reply, and he left her to seek what slumber she could in such unpleasant quarters.



ALADDIN AND THE GENIE

At daybreak the royal couple were conveyed to their apartments in the Palace much affrighted by their adventure.

The same adventure befell them again on the following night, and they could offer no explanation as to how or where they had been taken. The Sultan, feeling that *someone* must be to blame, and not knowing whom to punish, turned upon his son-in-law, and, casting him forth from the Palace, cancelled the marriage and ordered the festivities to terminate.

When the appointed three months had run their course, the widow duly presented herself at the Divan and prostrated herself before the Sultan crying, "O King of the Age, the hour hath come for thee to redeem thy bond."

Now when the Sultan's eye fell upon the woman, he suddenly recollected the rash promise he had made. Like one distracted he sought counsel of the Vizier.

"O Vizier," he exclaimed, "the woman who brought the jewels now claims fulfilment of my pledge,—yet 'twere a vile thing to give the Princess to a pauper's son."

"O Mighty Monarch," replied his wily minister, "can the King not give with one hand yet take with the other? Consent thou to the marriage,

but attach thereto a condition that none can accomplish."

"Inshallah!" said the Sultan, "I shall demand that which he cannot pay."

Returning to the Divan he addressed the widow thus: "Know, O Woman, that the word of the King is his bond, and thy son may claim my daughter when he hath paid her dower. Forty platters of virgin gold shall he bring, filled with precious stones, none smaller than a pigeon's egg. Forty maidens, fair and white, with two score slaves as black as night, shall bear these on their heads."

Aladdin heard of the Sultan's demand with derision. "I give thanks," he said, "that so small a thing is required of me."

He retired to his chamber and summoned his faithful Genie, to whom he related his needs.

"To hear is to obey," responded the Slave; and in the course of an hour he returned with the white maids, the black slaves, and the forty platters full of gems.

The widow marvelled greatly at the goodly company that filled her house, and fell to praising Allah and the Lamp all in one breath.

Aladdin forthwith opened the house door and begged his mother to lead the company before the Sultan.

The neighbours were filled with wonder when they beheld so splendid a procession, and eager spectators soon thronged the streets.

The maidens, beautiful to behold, in their gold embroidered robes inset with precious stones, bore upon their heads the platters covered with costliest brocades of rainbow hues, and beside each lily-white damsel walked a negro slave as black as ebony.

Into the Great Hall marched all the retinue, forming a semicircle before the Throne ; they prostrated themselves with one accord, and then arising uncovered the platters which shone like the sun at mid-day.

Neither the Sultan nor his courtiers could restrain their astonishment and admiration ; never had they witnessed so fine a spectacle.

Aladdin's mother, humble in bearing and poorly clad, stepped before the brilliant throng and cried, " O my Lord, I bring thee a gift for thy daughter ; deign to receive it and to grant my son the desire of his heart."

Delighted beyond all measure the Sultan gazed from the maids all fair and glittering to the platters of purest gold, and his heart went out to the widow's son who was the donor of this princely gift.

“O Mother,” said he to the widow, “let thy son come hither that he may wed my daughter with all speed.”

The proud and happy woman flew home on the wings of the wind to give her son the tidings and bid him prepare for the wedding festivities.

The Genie arrived almost before Aladdin had touched the Lamp and carried him off to a splendid Hammam, where he was bathed and scented by invisible hands till he seemed like one new born. Princely robes were brought him and the son of the poor tailor was transformed into a resplendent being. A gaily caparisoned steed awaited him, and eight and forty mounted slaves bedizened with gold and diamonds acted as his body-guard when he rode forth from the little home he would soon leave for ever.

Aladdin had meanwhile not forgotten his good mother, who was clad like a Sultana and had twelve bejewelled slave girls to attend her. Ah! how her heart swelled with joy and pride when her son rode before her scattering largess amongst the throng of people who had assembled in the streets!

Though there were many who recognized the tailor's son, none envied his good fortune, for his kindly nature endeared him to all who knew him.

The Sultan met his new son-in-law with

demonstrations of joy, and embraced him tenderly when he proffered formal proposal for the hand of the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor.

A great feast was now made, and Aladdin bore himself as one who was accustomed to the way of courts.

The marriage contract being soon drawn up, the knot was knotted as is customary in those parts, and the hour drew nigh when the bridegroom might visit his bride.

Aladdin arose to depart, but the Sultan withheld him, saying, "O my Son, why wouldst thou go hence ; wilt thou not complete the marriage ceremonies this day ? "

"O King of the Age," responded Aladdin, "it behoveth me to find a fitting habitation wherein to conduct the Princess. Deign to grant me a plot of ground whereon to build a pavilion near the Palace." The Sultan very willingly bestowed the land on so desirable a son-in-law, and a charming spot in the gardens was soon agreed upon.

Aladdin returned home, and, rubbing his Lamp, bade the Genie build him a house, "worthy of the loveliest lady in the world," without delay.

At sunrise the following morning the new pavilion upreared itself in the Sultan's garden.

It was a fairy palace ; beautiful as a dream

were the walls of marble inlaid with gold and rare mosaic work. Delicate minarets and spires showed themselves against the darkness of the cedars in the gardens, and fountains uprose to the strains of heavenly music. Beneath the central dome was a great hall with four and twenty windows encrusted with gems of every kind and colour in the world. Every detail was complete, from jars in the Treasury, overflowing with gold and silver, to the pots and pans of precious and rare metal in the kitchen.

The Sultan arose betimes, and, going to his casement to repeat the dawn-prayer, glanced towards the rising sun. He scarce could believe his eyes, for there before him, all rosy with the morning glow, stood the pavilion, which had been set up in a single night.

“Surely,” quoth he, “there is none other in all the kingdom to compare with Aladdin.”

After Aladdin had inspected his pavilion with rapture, he repaired to his little home in the mean street, to prepare for his nuptials.

Clad even more sumptuously than the day before, and all a-glitter with diamonds and rubies, he mounted his gaily caparisoned steed and rode through the highways to the Palace. His retinue rode before and behind, showering gold amongst

the populace, who shouted till they were hoarse, " Hurrah for Aladdin, Heaven bless him ! "

The Sultan received his son-in-law with tears of joy, and there was great rejoicing and feasting and decorations and music all over the City, from the Palace to the poorest hovel. When the sun was low, a litter bearing the Lady Buddir-al-Buddoor, and the widow, was carried with much ceremony over the magnificent carpet which Aladdin had asked the Genie to lay between the palace and the pavilion, and thus the Princess entered her new home. She was pleased with everything she saw, but most of all did she love and admire her husband ; and was delighted that he had outwitted the Vizier's son.

They lived happily together, doing deeds of kindness, so that the people blessed them five times daily when they prayed.

Once on a day an enemy invaded the land, and Aladdin proved himself as brave in war as he had been true in love. At the head of the army he led his force, against the great and powerful foe, with such skill and valour, that the enemy were put to rout, leaving the field strewn with their dead. All the kingdom made festival after this great victory, and the populace were wont to say, " After Allah in heaven comes Aladdin on earth."

All this long while the Magician, far away in Morocco, believed Aladdin to be dead, and the treasure he coveted unattainable, so he dismissed the matter from his thoughts and gave himself up to other wickedness. But by an unlucky chance he learnt the true state of affairs and immediately set out for China, determined to win the Lamp and ruin Aladdin at the same time.

He had recourse to necromancy to discover the whereabouts of the Lamp, and found that Aladdin kept it on a shelf in his own apartment.

The crafty sorcerer bided his time until Aladdin was away on a hunting expedition. Then, taking a basket of fine bright lamps on his arm, he walked the streets crying, "New lamps for old ! Who will exchange ? "

The townsfolk deemed him a madman for making so unprofitable an offer, and the children of the streets followed him about, laughing and hooting.

The old man heeded them not ; but continued on his way, crying, " New lamps for old ! Who will exchange ? " until he reached the Palace.

The Princess, who was in her bower, looked out of the casement on hearing the noise and laughter, but seeing only a poor old man, she sent a slave to find out the cause of the commotion.

When the Princess heard that the madman wished to exchange new lamps for old ones, she regretted that those in the pavilion were all of gold and silver—for being a woman, she loved to make a bargain.

Thereupon a slave said, “O my Lady, there is an old brass lamp in the Emir Aladdin’s chamber, shall I take it to that foolish man so that he can prove his words?”

“Ay,” replied the Princess; “it can have no value, take it an thou wilt.”

The exchange was soon effected, and the Magician, who was not slow to recognize the Wonderful Lamp, made off apace with it.

When night fell he rubbed the Lamp and the Genie stood before him, awaiting his command. “Slave,” said the Sorcerer, “transport the pavilion with all its inmates and also myself to my own garden in Africa.”

In a moment the order was executed, and the Magician, the pavilion and all its inmates were set down in Morocco.

Next morning when the Sultan said the dawn-prayer he glanced, as was his wont, towards the pavilion, and to his horror the edifice was not to be seen. When he had assured himself without a doubt that not only the pavilion but also the

Princess had been spirited away, his rage and grief knew no bounds. In his anger the Sultan denounced Aladdin, saying he was a sorcerer, a trader in black magic, and that he must die. He gave orders to seize Aladdin on his return from the hunt, and cut off his head without any more ado. News of the Sultan's cruel command soon spread amongst the soldiers and populace, and they rose as one man to protect their hero.

They rushed to the Palace, barricaded the gates, and threatened to raze the building to the ground should any harm befall Aladdin.

Under the circumstances the Sultan deemed it safest to make peace with his son-in-law, and ordered him to be brought before him.

When Aladdin was unbound and ushered into the royal presence, the Sultan cried, "O traitor, where is my daughter, the light of my life?"

"O my Lord," replied he, "I know not that aught hath befallen her."

The Sultan led him to the window, and indicating the empty space where "the Wonder of the World" had stood, demanded the pavilion and his daughter to be restored forthwith.

At first Aladdin was too much amazed to reply; but recovering himself he said, "O King of the Age, in truth I know not where they are."

“Then go forth and find them,” the Sultan commanded, “and if thou discover them not in forty days I will cut the head off thee.”

“O my Lord,” responded his son-in-law, “an I find them not, mine head will I cut off myself to give to thee.” He departed from the Palace bowed down by grief, wandering hither and thither, not knowing where to seek. For four days he roved aimlessly, and at length too weary to heed his footsteps, over-balanced and would have fallen into a stream but for a rock, to which he clung. Whilst holding thus, he rubbed the Ring, by chance, against the stone, and the Genie of the Cave at once stood before him.

Aladdin was overjoyed and cried, “O good Slave, bring me back my wife, and the pavilion, which have disappeared I know not whither.”

“O my Lord,” quoth the Slave, “thou hast commanded that which lieth not in my power to do. I am the Slave of the Ring, this matter pertaineth to the Slave of the Lamp.”

“Then I beg thee, O Slave, to set me down beside the pavilion wheresoever it may be.”

Aladdin closed his eyes, and opened his eyes, and there he stood outside the pavilion under the burning African sun.

The Princess espied him from her casement

and bade him come up silently for fear of the wicked one, the Magician, of whom she was terrified.

After their first transports of joy had passed, Aladdin learnt from his wife the cause of their misfortunes, and he at once set himself to circumvent the villain who had outwitted them by a trick.

The Princess related with bitter tears, that the Sorcerer threatened to marry her—without fail—as soon as the Sultan cut off Aladdin's head. To prove his power to do so, he had shown her the "Wonderful Lamp," which he carried in his bosom, and had taunted her with being the cause of her husband's undoing.

It being close on the hour when the Magician was wont to visit the Princess, it behoved Aladdin to make his plans expeditiously. He called to a slave to bring him two beakers, one of silver, the other of gold, both of which he filled with wine; but in the golden one he dropped also a potent sleeping-draught.

He now enjoined the Princess to proffer the golden goblet to the Magician, and solicit him to drink some wine with her in good fellowship.

Scarcely had he finished his preparations and concealed himself behind the arras, when the

Sorcerer arrived. The Princess did Aladdin's bidding, and the Magician, delighted at the friendly demeanour of one who had hitherto treated him with disdain, willingly accepted the golden goblet from her hand. No sooner had he quaffed the wine than he fell back in a deep slumber. Aladdin rushing from his hiding-place secured the Lamp, and called his slaves to take away the wicked man and put him to death.

The Lamp once more in his possession, a moment sufficed to transport the pavilion, with all therein, back to the old place in the Sultan's garden.

When the Sultan once more embraced his beloved daughter, he wept bitter tears of repentance for his harsh conduct to Aladdin ; and the bond of affection between him and his son-in-law now became stronger than before.

But their trials were not yet ended ; for the Magician had a younger brother who likewise was expert in the black art, and he, learning the manner of his elder's death, resolved to avenge him.

Disguised as a holy woman named Fatima, he gained admittance to the pavilion, where he endeavoured to compass the destruction of the "Wonder of the World" and all who therein dwelt.

He was foiled by the Genie of the Lamp, who warned Aladdin of his danger, and thus enabled him to punish the pretended holy woman by a death that was richly deserved ; and from that time forth he and his well-beloved Princess lived in peace and happiness. The years passed and the Sultan was gathered to his fathers, so Aladdin and Buddir-al-Buddoor reigned in his stead. They were loved by all and every one, until the time came when they, too, were called hence into the great Unknown.



ALADDIN AND THE PRINCESS



“THE OGRES FELL TO PELTING US WITH ROCKS”

SINDBAD THE SAILOR

HINDBAD was a poor porter who dwelt in Bagdad, in the reign of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid. It chanced one warm day that he had a heavy burden to bear, and being aweary, sat down to rest outside a fine mansion.

The sound of sweet music intermingling with the singing of birds reached him through the open casements, and as pleasant odours of savoury food greeted his nostrils, he concluded that some festive entertainment was being held within.

Seeing a servant standing by the gate he asked who might be the owner of the house ; which question seemed to surprise the man. “Of a

verity thou must be a stranger in the city," he replied, "else wouldst thou have heard of Sindbad the Sailor, who is famous for the seven voyages he hath made, and is rich beyond all reckoning."

Thereupon Hindbad made answer, "Alack! how different is Sindbad's lot to mine! Each day must I bear heavy burdens from morn till eve, yet can I scarce earn barley-bread wherewith to feed my family; whereas thy master leads a life of ease and pleasure, and knows neither travail nor hardship."

When Hindbad had thus expressed himself, another servant came out of the house and asked the porter to come within, as his master desired to see him.

Hindbad followed, and was ushered into a stately hall where a number of people were seated about a well-spread table. At the head sat Sindbad the Sailor, a venerable gentleman with a long white beard.

When the porter entered and looked timidly about him, Sindbad bade him draw near and take a seat at his right hand. He plied Hindbad with food and wine, and when the repast was over, thus addressed him.

"Know, O Porter, it was by accident thy words reached me through the open casement;

and feeling that thou art in error concerning myself, I would fain set thee right in the matter. My wealth and ease were not acquired without toil and hardship, as thou and all this company will judge, an ye have patience to listen to an account of what I have endured, in my voyaging to and fro, from country to country and sea to sea.

THE FIRST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

My father, a prosperous merchant, died and left me a goodly inheritance, which I, in the heedlessness of youth, soon squandered. Then finding myself well-nigh ruined, I collected what little remained of my fortune, and bought therewith goods and merchandise. With these I made my way to Bassorah and there embarked, in company with other merchants, upon a vessel outward bound on a trading expedition. Our course lay towards the Indies through the Persian Gulf, and we touched at many ports where we sold or bartered our goods.

One day we came to a low-lying verdant island, and the Captain permitted us to land, so that we might indulge in such sports and exercise as pleased us.

Whilst thus occupied, we suddenly became

aware of a violent trembling underfoot, and at that moment we heard the voice of the Captain crying, 'Run for your lives and get aboard ; where you stand is not an island but the back of a fish, whereon the sand hath settled and trees have grown. Hasten or you will be drowned.'

We fled for our lives, and the more active amongst us reached the vessel in safety. I, having wandered inland, was not of this number, and the monster, whereon I stood, sank beneath the water, carrying all upon it into the depths.

I struggled to the surface, and was fortunate to find a piece of wood whereto I clung ; but for this support I must inevitably have been drowned.

Meanwhile the Captain had hoisted sail and now sped away, regardless of those who still struggled in the sea. For hours I was buffeted by the waves ; but at length was cast upon the shore of an island. I lay exhausted on the strand, until, revived by the warmth of the sun, I went in search of food.

Finding an abundance of ripe fruit and a spring of water, I was heartened to go exploring, and presently came to a fine pasturage whereon horses were grazing. There were several men in charge, and one of them advanced towards me and asked who I was, and how I came there.

I replied, ' I am a waif from the sea, cast upon these shores by the waves.'

The men, who were grooms of Mihrjan, king of the island, invited me to accompany them to the Capital, whither they were about to take some horses.

I gladly did so, and the good fellows lost no time in making my case known to their king. I was summoned into the presence, and, upon hearing my tale, the king treated me as an honoured guest, and I tarried some time at the Court.

One day as I stood by the shore, I descried a ship entering the harbour and recognized it as the vessel on which I had sailed from Bassorah. As soon as the anchor was cast, I went aboard and claimed my bales of goods from the Captain, who could scarce believe his eyes when he saw me. As soon as they were handed over to me, I selected therefrom the most valuable contents, and carrying them to the palace, presented them to King Mihrjan as a gift.

He expressed his pleasure at my good fortune, and made me a valuable present, in return for mine to him. I exchanged my goods for spices and other commodities, and embarked on the same ship, as it was now homeward bound.

In due course we reached Bagdad-city, and having realized a fortune by the sale of my goods, I bought a house and all that appertains thereto and lived in comfort."

Sindbad, having concluded the history of his first voyage, presented Hindbad with a hundred gold pieces, and invited him to return on the morrow.

Next day, Hindbad came to Sindbad's house, garbed in his best, and after being served with meat and drink, in company with the other guests, listened with interest to the narration of

THE SECOND VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"Having once tasted the delights of travel, I soon wearied of the eventless existence I was now leading, so I put to sea on board a merchant vessel, having provided myself with merchandise of all kinds, for trade. We made a prosperous voyage, bartering and selling with good profit, until we came to an island, which in spite of its extreme fertility appeared quite uninhabited.

We landed and enjoyed walking amidst luxuriant fruit trees and fragrant flowers. I wandered on and on, till at length, being weary, I sat beneath a tree and fell asleep.

I know not how long I slumbered, but awoke

to find that the ship had sailed away leaving me behind, alone and forgotten.

I fell to weeping and lamenting ; but this availing naught, bethought to look about me, and climbed a high tree in order to gain a wider view.

From my point of vantage I descried a great white thing a long distance off ; and without loss of time I scrambled down and made towards it.

On a closer view the object proved to be a smooth white dome of great compass. It was just the sunset hour, and suddenly it became quite dark as though a cloud had obscured the sun. I marvelled greatly when I discovered that this darkness was due to a huge bird, so wide of wing that, as it flew, it veiled the sun completely.

‘ Ho,’ said I to myself, ‘ that must be the bird Roc, whereof the travellers tell, and the dome is none other than its egg.’

The bird hovered over its egg, and then settling itself upon it, went to sleep with its legs stretched behind it on the ground.

I unwound my turban and tied myself therewith to one of the great legs, hoping thus to be carried away from this lonely isle.

At dawn the Roc rose high in the air, carrying me with it, and after a long flight again descended to earth.

I unloosened my bonds and fled from the vicinity, though, truth to tell, the bird had never noticed me.

I was now in a barren cleft betwixt high mountains, and as I walked along, I perceived the valley was strewn with large diamonds. I regarded these with pleasure, until I became aware of a great number of monstrous serpents a short distance away. This filled me with apprehension, for I doubted not that with the waning of daylight, these creatures would issue from their lairs in search of food.

Weary and disheartened I sat down, and must have fallen into a doze, for I awoke with a start as a large piece of raw meat fell with a thud beside me.

Not a soul was to be seen, but every now and again, a lump of raw flesh would descend from the rocks and fall into the valley.

As the meat lay on the ground, I noted that the diamonds adhered to the sticky surface, and this recalled to my mind a tale that I had hitherto disbelieved. It was said, that merchants desiring to gain the splendid diamonds that lay upon the ground in an unapproachable valley, threw down lumps of meat even as I had observed. They then awaited in concealment amongst the rocks

until the eagles, which are in great numbers thereabouts, pounced on the flesh and bore it aloft to their nests.

The men would then rush out with great clamour and frighten away the birds, so that they could remove the gems that had stuck to the meat.

‘If this be so,’ said I, ‘here is the means of my deliverance,’ whereupon I filled my pockets and wallet with the largest and choicest diamonds.

I then lay upon my back and fastened a large piece of meat to my breast. No sooner was this done, than an eagle swooped down, and gripping the meat carried it up, with me clinging thereto.

The eagle flew to its nest on the mountain-top, but as it deposited its burden, there arose a great clattering which frightened the bird away from its meal. I loosed myself from the meat and stood beside it, to the terror of the merchant who had come to collect his spoil. Assuaging his fears, I promised to reward him from my choice store of gems if he would permit me to accompany him.

He willingly agreed, and conducted me to the site where the expedition was encamped.

I joined the party, and we fared safely together to Bagdad-city, where from my great riches I gave

freely to the poor, and lived well and merrily until I wearied of my idleness."

Sindbad here concluded the story of his second voyage, and giving Hindbad another hundred gold pieces, bade him return on the morrow to hear

THE THIRD VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"As I told you yesterday, I grew tired of being idle, so I again took passage on board a merchantman bound for a long voyage.

We called at many ports, trading with more or less success, until we were overtaken by a terrific gale, which drove us from our course.

We sailed on, not knowing whither, until we approached a rocky island. When the Captain espied the land, he commenced to tear his beard and cry aloud.

'O Captain, what ails thee?' we asked, and he made reply, 'O my Brethren, an evil destiny hath brought us to an island the denizens of which resemble apes; and they are of such ferocity that none cometh out of their hands alive.'

As the words left his lips, we beheld a multitude of tiny creatures swimming towards the ship.

They were covered with hair, and hideous of countenance, and climbed up the sides of the

vessel with the agility of monkeys. In a twinkling they furl'd our sails and gnawed every rope and cable in twain, so that the ship was carried by the tide and stranded on the coast.

Despite their small size, we did not dare to attack these creatures, for they swarmed in such multitudes as to completely overpower us.

They forced us to land on the island, and made off with the vessel, leaving us stranded on the shore. We managed to subsist on berries and fruits, and walked until we reached the interior of the island, where we came upon a large house, the gates of which stood open.

We entered a hall containing a number of braziers and cooking utensils, and about them were scattered great heaps of human bones.

We trembled at the sight, fearing I know not what, but our alarm was well-founded, for at that moment a huge black giant as tall as a date-palm came upon us. His single eye burned like a coal of fire in the centre of his forehead, and long teeth like the tusks of a boar hung over his ugly lips. His ears dangled over his shoulders, and he had nails like the claws of a lion.

This dreadful apparition caused us such horror, that we lay upon the floor like dead men.

The blackamoor considered us awhile, and

then picked me up, handling me as a butcher doth a sheep he is about to slaughter.

By a lucky chance I was a lean man, so he let me go, and selected the Captain, who was plump, in my stead. He killed the poor fellow with one blow, and then roasted him on a fire which he built up in a brazier. After demolishing his victim, the giant lay down and slept until morning, when he arose and went out.

As soon as the monster had departed we took counsel, one with the other, and made a plan whereby we could escape from our terrible fate.

We waited in trouble and tribulation, until the giant, having returned and roasted and eaten one of our number, laid himself down to sleep as on the previous night.

Ten of us now stepped quietly forward, and took two iron spits from among the cooking utensils. We heated these red hot and then with one accord drove them into the blackamoor's eye, so that he became stone-blind.

He started up yelling in agony, and stumbled about trying to catch us; but we eluded him, and he went out of the door still howling and screaming.

We ran helter skelter to the seashore, and

quickly collecting some wood, bound it into rafts, and put out to sea with rough paddles hastily made.

We had not gone far, when the giant appeared, supported by two blackamoors, more terrible, even, than himself.

We paddled desperately, but the ogres fell to pelting us with rocks, and wrecked all the rafts, save the one that held me and two companions.

By the mercy of Allah we escaped those fiends ; but spent many hours fighting for life on our frail craft. Carried by wind and wave we were presently cast ashore on an island, where we were able to refresh ourselves with fruit and water.

We lay down to sleep off our fatigue, and were awakened by a hissing noise. Ere we could collect our scattered wits, a great serpent seized one of my comrades, and, swallowing him whole, went its way.

Sorrowing and in mortal terror we knew not what to do. For safety we climbed into a high tree ; but at dusk the serpent came back, it climbed up the trunk, seized my friend and swallowed him in one mouthful before it glided away.

At daybreak, I descended and found a means whereby to protect myself from this new terror, for having collected a quantity of wood and

brambles, I built a rampart around the tree, and then climbed aloft. When the serpent returned, its attempts to scale my rampart were fruitless, and being thus frustrated it departed.

Deciding not to suffer another night of horror, I went to the shore with the intention of throwing myself into the sea. What was my joy when I discerned a ship amidst the waves; my frantic signals were observed by those on board, and a boat put out to rescue me. I was astonished and delighted when I found myself not only safe, but once more on the ship which had sailed away, leaving me asleep upon the shore, on my second voyage.

When the Captain and crew recognized me, my goods were at once handed over, so that I was able to trade at the stopping-places on the way home; thus augmenting my wealth, which was now considerable. So ended my third voyage; to-morrow I will relate what befell on the fourth."

Hindbad received his wonted guerdon, and gladly returned on the morrow to hear of

THE FOURTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"The next time my love of adventure urged me to set forth on my travels, I embarked, as

usual, on a sea-worthy vessel, and sailed from place to place in company with a goodly band of merchants.

One day we were overtaken by a squall that wrecked the ship, so that many of the crew and passengers were drowned.

My good fortune did not desert me, and I succeeded, with several of my fellows, in reaching the shore of a fertile island.

Seeing some houses in the distance we made for them, hoping to obtain hospitality and shelter. As we drew near, a band of negroes came out, and, seizing us, bore us to their king.

He signed to us to be seated, for we understood not the language, and had food set before us, the like of which I had never seen before, and had no appetite to eat. My comrades partook of it, and such was the effect upon them that they became quite stupid, and permitted the negroes, who were cannibals, to kill and eat them one by one.

It chanced that I was in bad health, and so wasted as to be mere skin and bone, in consequence of which the savages felt no desire to eat me. They took so little notice of me, that one day I managed to give my keepers the slip, and sped with all haste away from the settlement.

I tramped along for seven days and nights, resting awhile, and gathering herbs and grasses to stay my hunger. On the eighth day I came across some white people engaged in picking pepper. My heart leapt with joy when I heard them speak Arabic, mine own language.

Taking compassion on my sufferings, they carried me with them when they sailed back to their own island. On arriving there, their king deigned to receive me, and listened to my adventures with interest. He afterwards gave me clothes and commanded an officer to take care of me.

The Capital was a busy and thriving city ; but I was surprised to note that the citizens and nobles all rode their horses bareback and without stirrups or bridle. On inquiry, I found that these objects were unknown in the country. I thereupon sought the aid of a carpenter and blacksmith, and together we made a good saddle, bridle and stirrups. These I presented to the king, who was mightily pleased, never having ridden in such comfort before.

Soon the grandees and citizens were thronging to me, desiring saddles, so that I amassed considerable wealth by selling them at a high price.

The king was pleased to show me great favour, and married me to one of the principal ladies of his Court, but she fell ill and died not long after our marriage, and then, unhappily, I found that, according to the custom of the country, it was my fate to be buried with my dead wife.

In spite of my protestations, I was supplied with seven small loaves and a jar of water, and then lowered into a deep pit, but my coffin was left open, and this enabled me to escape.

My burial-place was a subterranean cavern, full fifty fathoms deep, with passages that appeared endless, as I groped about them. The opening through which I had been let down was closed by a huge block of stone, and never a ray of light penetrated anywhere.

One day, when on the point of starvation, the sound of a stealthy footstep and the breathing of some animal, made me start up with renewed animation.

I followed the sound, and at last after winding in and out of the innumerable tortuous passages, beheld the light of day streaming through a hole in the rock.

I scrambled out, and found myself upon the sea-shore. My first act was to offer up a prayer of thankfulness to the Merciful One, who had

sent a wild beast to prowl about the cavern just at that time, and thus lead me to safety. Whilst searching for herbs wherewith to satisfy my hunger, I looked up, and saw a vessel close in-shore. I waved my turban, and called to the Captain to take me on board. A boat was put off, and the Captain and crew all treated me with the greatest kindness, when I had related my story to them.

We made a good voyage, and in due course I reached Bagdad-city, full of gratitude for my safe return to my home and kinsfolk."

Here Sindbad paused, and bidding his guests return on the morrow, he gave Hindbad the usual gift of one hundred gold pieces, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

THE FIFTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"After a time, I again became possessed by a longing to visit foreign lands, so I packed my bales of merchandise in readiness for departure, and bought a fine newly-built ship.

Having hired a captain and crew, and arranged with a party of merchants as passengers, we sailed away, going from one country to another, trading as we went.

We chanced to pass a desert island, and some

of the merchants begged to land, as they were desirous of inspecting a large white dome, half buried in the sand, that had attracted their attention.

When they came near the dome, they discovered it to be a gigantic egg, which they broke open with hatchets. Inside it was a large bird, just on the point of emerging, and the merchants, not realizing that it was a young Roc, proceeded to cook and eat it.

They then returned to the vessel, and we were preparing to depart, when suddenly the sun became obscured as by the passing of great dark clouds.

We looked up and saw two giant Rocs overhead ; they circled round the site where lay the fragments of the egg, and uttered angry cries.

We put out to sea, fearing their fury, and the Rocs flew away ; but our satisfaction was short-lived, for the birds returned, each carrying an enormous rock in its claws.

They flew over the ship and let their burdens fall. One piece of rock dropped into the sea ; but the other came plump amidship ; and with a crash our trusty vessel broke into fragments. Everyone on board was either crushed to death or fell into the sea.

I seized a floating plank, and getting astride, paddled with my feet, so that I directed its course to the shores of an island that I saw in the distance.

The island was a veritable Garden of Paradise, fruitful and fertile. I walked inland and presently came to the bank of a stream whereon an ancient man was seated. I saluted him and he returned my greeting by signs that seemed to say, 'Take me on thy shoulders and carry me across the stream.'

Believing him in need of assistance, I took him on my back, carried him across the water, and bent down to enable him to get off more easily. But this he would not do, nay, he settled himself the more firmly, and wound his legs so tightly around my neck that he well-nigh strangled me, and I fell fainting to the ground.

This did not serve to dislodge him, and there he sat drumming me so hard with his heels that I was obliged to rise for very agony.

From that time I was his slave, never for a moment did I get quit of him. He forced me to do his bidding by beating me with his feet, which caused more pain than the lashing of whips.

I bore my misery some time ; but on a lucky day I came to a place where several gourds had fallen from a tree.

I took a large one, cleaned and dried it, set it in the sun, and then filled it with grape juice, there being an abundance of this fruit on the island.

When we came again to the place, the juice had become strong wine, of which I drank a long draught, and felt so sustained and comforted that I commenced to sing and dance.

The old man signed to me to give him some of the wine, so I handed him the gourd and he drained it to the dregs. He now grew very lively and swayed from side to side on my shoulders, and by degrees the grip of his legs became easier about my neck.

With a sudden jerk I threw my burden to the ground, where he lay in a deep slumber.

I picked up a stone, and smashing his skull, was rid of him for ever.

Thereafter I dwelt in peace, until a passing ship took me aboard. When I had related my adventure to the Captain, he exclaimed, 'Thou hast borne the Old Man of the Sea upon thy shoulders, and art the only one who hath ever escaped him alive.'

Chance brought the vessel to a port known as the City of Apes, and I landed with the view of exploring the place. I wandered further than I

had intended, and when I returned to the landing-place the vessel had departed without me.

A citizen taking pity on my destitution and misery, supplied me with a sack of pebbles, and permitted me to accompany a party of people who were going to collect cocoanuts.

We journeyed to a grove full of lofty trees, which had such high smooth trunks, that no man could climb them. Numbers of apes swarmed amongst the branches, and we pelted them with the pebbles we had brought in our sacks. This treatment annoyed the apes, and they thought to avenge themselves by throwing down cocoanuts, the only missiles within their reach.

By the time our pebbles were exhausted, each of us had a sackful of nuts which was worth a large sum of money.

I made many similar expeditions, and by the time a homeward-bound vessel called at the port I was possessed of a good store of nuts and a large sum of money. Arrived safely at Bagdad-city, I distributed alms and gifts, and returned to my old merry life, and so ended my fifth voyage."

Hindbad went home the richer by another hundred gold pieces, and came on the morrow to hear.

THE SIXTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

Said Sindbad, "Know, O my friends, that after I had spent some time in comfort and pleasure, a company of merchants came to me one day. As they conversed about their trade and travels in foreign parts, I was once more seized with a desire to fare forth to unknown countries. Undeterred by my previous experiences, I resolved upon another journey, and packed my bales forthwith.

All went well with me, until the Captain of the ship whereon I travelled, lost his course and steered into a dangerous current. The vessel was driven upon a mountainous island, and broke up so quickly that, in a few minutes, all aboard were struggling for dear life amongst the waves.

Some of us, I amongst the number, were fortunate enough to gain the strand, and on clambering up the cliffs, found ourselves upon the main land.

We wandered a short distance and came to a stream of fresh water, that meandered on and then lost itself underground. Beneath the pellucid waters of this stream one could see the bed, which was covered with precious stones

of extraordinary size and brilliancy. All about the banks lay rare gems of great value ; but amidst all this wealth, we were poor indeed, for we lacked food and every comfort of life.

Such food as we had in our wallets, was divided equally amongst us ; and when this was spent my companions expired, one by one, until I alone survived, being strong and hardy of constitution.

I buried the last of my comrades on the shore, and lonely and starving, I knew not what to do. As I sat by the stream the thought crossed my mind that every river must have an end as well as a beginning ; and this one would probably be no exception.

Acting on this idea, I built a raft from the wreckage on the coast, and having steadied it by a cargo of gems and precious ores, seated myself upon it, and let it float along the course of the stream.

The raft drifted down the current, and presently came to the place where the stream ran into a subterranean cavern. On and on it went, until at length I lost consciousness, being spent for want of food.

When my senses returned, my raft had been made fast, and I was surrounded by a

crowd of negroes, who regarded me with amazement.

‘Peace be upon thee, O my Brother, from whence comest thou?’ said one of them.

I returned the salutation and begged for some food, which was quickly placed before me.

The blacks told me they were tillers of the soil, and said that never before had anyone been known to come from the country beyond the great mountain.

Upon relating my story to them, one of their number offered to escort me to the Capital, so that I might seek counsel of their good king.

The monarch received me with great civility, and when I prostrated myself before him, bade me rise and seat myself beside the throne. He hearkened with interest to the recital of my many adventures, and examined the jewels I had brought from beyond the mountain, with expressions of pleasure and admiration.

I begged him to accept them all, and he thanked me gratefully for the gift. He thereupon ordered a lodging to be prepared for me in the palace, and ever regarded me as an honoured guest.

I stayed in Sarandib, which was the name of the island, for some time, and parted with regret

from my good friends when the opportunity came to return to Bagdad. A vessel being fitted out to make the journey, I bade the king farewell with expressions of gratitude and affection.

He bestowed upon me a gift of very great value, and also charged me with presents, including a slave-maiden of wondrous beauty, and a letter for the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, at Bagdad.

Wind and fortune favouring us, I came safely to mine own city of Bagdad, and seeking audience of the Caliph, handed him the letter and gifts from the King of Sarandib.

The Commander of the Faithful was graciously pleased to hear of my six journeys, and all that had befallen me, and dismissed me with a lavish gift.

I thereupon returned to my home, and forgot not the poor and needy, and made merry with my friends and kinsfolk, and so ended my sixth voyage."

Hindbad was made happy with one hundred gold pieces, and returned on the next day to hear Sindbad relate his seventh and last voyage.

THE SEVENTH AND LAST VOYAGE OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR

"I settled down in Bagdad-city, and made up my mind to leave it nevermore, for I had endured

many hardships and much suffering, and all desire for further adventures had gone from me.

One day, however, an officer came to my house and said, 'The Caliph hath sent me for thee.' I accompanied him into the presence, whereupon the Commander of the Faithful greeted me and said, 'O Sindbad, I require a service of thee; I would that thou shouldst be the bearer of a missive and a gift from me to the King of Sarandib.'

I was loath to accept this office, having had my fill of travel and adventure; but the Caliph insisted, and it was not for me to gainsay his command.

He charged me with the gifts and letter, and presented me with a thousand gold pieces to cover the expenses of the journey. I was thus forced to set out once more, and was soon upon my way to Sarandib. The winds were propitious, and I reached the island without mishap.

The King of Sarandib received me with great favour, crying, 'O Sindbad, I bless the day whereon I see thee once again;' and begged me to remain at the Court. But having executed my errand, my one desire was to reach home, and there enjoy rest and tranquillity.

We sailed homeward before a fair wind; but

had only been out a few days when we were attacked by a band of corsairs. They boarded our boat, slew many of the crew and captured the rest of us. They bore us to an island where we were sold as slaves. I fell into the hands of a wealthy man, who took me home with him and treated me kindly.

One day he asked me whether I could shoot a bow, and upon my answering, 'I did in my youth,' he equipped me with a bow and arrows, and bade me mount with him upon an elephant.

We travelled some distance from the city, and just before dawn reached a dense forest.

My master ordered me to dismount and climb a tree, and there lie in wait until some elephants came that way, when I was to shoot at them with my bow and arrows. I waited, not without trepidation, until sunrise, when a distant stampeding informed me of the vicinity of a herd of elephants.

Presently they passed beneath my tree, and I shot, bringing down a fine large one.

I returned to my master, who praised my dexterity, and together we buried the great creature, purposing to remove the tusks, which are of great value, after the body had decayed.

Every morning, for eight weeks or more, I

succeeded in bringing down an elephant ; but one day as I waited amongst the branches of a tree, I heard a great stampeding and trumpeting as of an exceptionally large herd. Hundreds of the creatures advanced towards me with trunks uplifted and a noise that was deafening. They encircled my perch, and one of them, winding his trunk about the bole, pulled up the tree and threw it to the ground.

The elephant picked me up, as I lay almost stunned, and set me upon his back. I sat there too much frightened to move, and was carried a considerable distance, whilst the remainder of the herd tramped solemnly behind. Presently my captor lifted me off his back, and placing me upon a high mound, went away followed by the other elephants.

I got up, and found that I had been deposited on a great heap of bones and tusks, and was confident in my mind that this was the elephants' burial-place. Their only reason for bringing me to this spot was, without doubt, that I might here collect all the tusks I required without shooting any more of their number. By dint of walking for a day and night, I reached my master's house, and related to him the sagacity of the elephants.

From that time forth we secured a great store of ivory from the mound. My master in token of his gratitude for the wealth I had been the means of bringing him, gave me my freedom, and secured me a passage on a boat bound for Bassorah.

When I bade him farewell, he presented me with a store of tusks of great value.

My heart leapt within me when I once more beheld Bagdad-city—the House of Peace—and I hied me to the Caliph, and acquainted him with the success of my mission, and related what had betided me on the journey.

The Commander of the Faithful rejoiced at my safe return, and bade his scribes write my adventures in letters of gold ; said he, ‘ Thy story is of all strange stories the most marvellous, and I will store the record of it in my archives, so that thy achievements shall not be forgotten.’

Then I returned to my house, and gave of my abundance to the poor, and gifts to all my friends and kindred.

I now dwell in joy and serenity, and this ends the history of my seventh and last voyage.”

Sindbad then addressed himself to Hindbad, saying, “ Hast thou ever heard of any who hath suffered and toiled more than I, or is it

not just that I should now enjoy my remaining years ? ”

Hindbad salaamed and replied, “ O my Lord, right well dost thou deserve every blessing, and art worthy of thy riches, since thou makest good use of them.”

Sindbad thereupon paid him a hundred gold pieces, and bade him henceforth eat at his table, so that he never more should know want, nor lack a friend whilst Sindbad the Sailor lived.



“LONELY AND STARVING, I KNEW NOT WHAT TO DO”



PRINCESS NOURONNIHAR

PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY PERIE BANOU

THERE was erstwhile in the land of India, a Sultan who had three sons, the eldest of whom was Houssain, the second Ali and the youngest Ahmed. He also had a niece, Nouronihar, who had been brought up in the palace and shared the education of the princes ; so

that she grew dear to her playmates, and when they attained to manhood, they all fell in love with her and desired to marry her.

The Sultan was sore troubled when he became aware of this, for he foresaw the impossibility of satisfying each of his sons, and they were all equally dear to him.

One day he called the princes to him, and presenting each of them with a large sum of money, bade them travel to far lands, and learn all they could of the manners and customs of the countries where they sojourned. "Moreover," said he, "to him who bringeth me the rarest of curiosities, shall I award the hand of the Princess Nouronihar."

The sons obedient to the desire of the Sultan made their preparations, and set out on their journey disguised as merchants. They travelled together until they came to a Khan which stood at the junction of three roads, each branching in a different direction. Here they took leave of one another, after agreeing to meet again, at the same spot, that day twelvemonth.

Prince Houssain bent his course to Bishan-garh, the capital of which he reached after journeying for three months. Here he succeeded in obtaining a magic square of carpet

which had the power of transporting him who stood upon it to any spot he desired, and this with the speed of lightning. Houssain felt that this was indeed the rarest of all curiosities, so after biding his time in the city, he had himself and the attendant who accompanied him carried on the carpet in the twinkling of an eye to the rendezvous where the brothers had arranged to meet.

Meanwhile Prince Ali visited Persia, where he bought an ivory tube which permitted him who looked through it to behold any object he desired to see. "This must, of a surety, be the rarest of all curiosities," said Ali, and quite content with his purchase, he returned to the meeting-place, where his brother Houssain was already in waiting. When Prince Ahmed parted from his brothers, he wended his way to Samarkand, and in his wanderings there he came across a hawker who had a magic apple for sale. This apple had the power of curing any and all diseases, and making the sick person well immediately the fruit was placed near his nostrils. The Prince gladly paid the forty thousand gold pieces which were demanded for this treasure, for he was certain that it must be the rarest of all curiosities. After testing its virtues

upon a sick man, who was at once restored to health, he hied him India-wards to rejoin his brothers.

The three princes were overjoyed to meet again, and each one displayed his "rarest of all curiosities" with pride. They duly admired Houssain's Magic Carpet, and Ali handing his Spying Tube to his elder brother, asked him to prove its powers there and then.

Houssain put it to his eye and expressed the wish to see his cousin, the Princess Nouronihar; in a moment his face blanched and tears coursed down his cheeks. The brothers, alarmed at these signs of grief, enquired the cause of his dolour.

"Alas!" said he, "the Princess lieth upon her couch, sick unto death. O my brothers, an ye would see her once again, look now ere she hath breathed her last."

Ali and Ahmed took the Spying Tube in turn and gazed sorrowfully at the beautiful Nouronihar, who appeared to be in her last extremity. "Had she but mine apple," quoth Ahmed, "the scent of it would soon restore her to health and strength, but alas! we are so far away."

"The distance is of no import," said Hous-

sain, "Sit upon my carpet and we shall be beside her in a moment."

Accordingly they sat upon the carpet and willed with all their might and main to reach the Princess, and straightway they found themselves beside her bed. The alarm of the attendants at this sudden intrusion was turned to joy when they recognized the princes. Ahmed bent over the unconscious figure of Nouronnihar and held the apple to her nostrils. The effect was marvellous; she sat up in bed, stretched herself and, opening her eyes as one just awakened from sleep, regarded the princes with astonishment.

After expressing their pleasure at her recovery, the brothers hastened to greet the Sultan, who received them with every mark of fatherly love, and thanked them for having been the means of restoring Nouronnihar to him. He listened patiently to the claims brought forward by his sons in regard to the respective merits of their curiosities, each one considering that *his* was the rarest. When he had examined the Carpet, the Spying Tube and the Magic Apple with equal interest, he remained awhile in deep thought.

"O my sons," said he, "the prize may not

be awarded to any one of you without unfairness to the other two. Albeit Ahmed's Apple hath cured the Princess, it was by means of Ali's Spying Tube ye learnt of her distress, and yet without the Carpet of Houssain, neither of these would have availed to save her life. So can I not, without injustice, give preference to any of these objects which are of equal value and marvel, therefore must I fix upon some other means whereby the victor may be determined.

“Go each of you and provide yourselves with bow and arrows, then ride forth to the plain where the horses exercise. I, with my Minister of State, the Grandees and Lords, will follow instantly, and to him amongst you three, who shall speed his arrow the farthest, will I give the Princess Nouronihar for consort.”

The princes bowed to the wisdom of their sire, and providing themselves with bow and arrows, rode to the appointed place. As soon as all was in readiness, Houssain sped his shaft far along the level plain. Ali shot next and outdistanced the other, and lastly came Ahmed's turn. He bent his bow and his arrow flew far; but none could see whither it went. Knights and Courtiers joined in the search; but Ahmed's

arrow was nowhere to be found. At length the Sultan ordered them to seek no further and decreed that Prince Ali should be elected victor and receive the coveted prize.

So in due course Prince Ali and his cousin were wedded with the usual ceremonies and rejoicings. Grieved and disappointed, Prince Houssain left the Court, and, after renouncing his rights of succession to the crown, donned the habit of a Fakir, and retired to lead a hermit's life.

Prince Ahmed likewise absented himself from the marriage festivities, and spent his time searching for the missing arrow. On and on he went over hill and dale, until he came to a steep and craggy rock, and there, at last, he found it fallen flat upon a stone.

"Certainly 'tis mine and none other," quoth Ahmed, "but it passeth my understanding how a shaft could fly so far or fall in so strange a fashion."

Seeking to solve the mystery, he looked about and became aware of an iron door which barred his further progress. It flew open at his touch and disclosed a subterranean passage, down which he passed without hesitation. Presently the way opened out and he stood in a spacious

square, brilliantly lighted by lamps and candelabra. A large and stately palace fronted him, and as he gazed in wonderment at this fine edifice, a lady emerged from a portico and advanced towards him.

The lady was rarely beautiful, and all aglitter with jewels that studded her resplendent garments and festooned her graceful form from head to foot. A bevy of fair damsels followed close behind her; but she was to them as is the noon-day sun to the twinkling stars.

Prince Ahmed saluted her with the salaam, which she returned with all courtesy and then said in accents honey-sweet, "Welcome, O Prince Ahmed; how fareth it with thee? Too long hast thou tarried ere coming hither."

The Prince thanked her for her gracious welcome and was delighted to receive an invitation to enter the palace.

The lady permitted him to seat himself beside her, and quoth she, smiling at his bewilderment, "Thou knowest me not, so it beseemeth me, O Prince, to tell thee who I am.

"As thou hast surely read in the Koran, our Holy Writ, the world is the habitation of mortal man and also of the genies who dwell beneath the ground. In me thou beholdest

Perie Banou, the daughter of a mighty and powerful genie. Being of age to marry, I have, in accordance with our fairy custom, been permitted to choose the consort that pleaseth my maiden fancy best.

"Long time have I observed thee, and now do deem thee most worthy to be my liege and lord.

"'Twas I, standing invisible beside thee, who seized thy arrow as it sprung from bow, and brought it with me, so that thou, in seeking it, wouldst be led hence to the entrance of my realms."

Prince Ahmed hearkened as one entranced, the very heart of him drawn out by those dulcet tones.

"O loveliest of Beings," said he, "thou art in very truth my Queen, my Lady," and he took her hand and placed it on his breast and upon his eyes in token of his fealty and submission. The fairy replied, "An thy heart be true to mine, take my hand and plight me thy troth even as I pledge my faith to thee." Upon the Prince responding, "Freely do I give myself to thee to do thy will and bidding," Perie Banou replied, "Thou art my husband and I am thy wife." Thus were they joined in wedlock as it is ordained by fairy-lore and



PRINCE AHMED AND THE FAIRY PERIE BANOU

custom, while with dance and song the evening was brought to a close, and Ahmed's days with his fairy-wife flew by on golden wings in a paradise of beauty, joy and peace.

Thus six months passed in bliss and pleasure ; but at length the memory of his sire, the Sultan, became ever more insistent in the Prince's mind, so that he was fain to confess to Perie Banou, the longing that possessed him to see his father again.

The fairy, knowing how true he was to her, gave her consent that he should visit his father ; but warned him to speak no word of his marriage or aught that had since befallen him. He willingly promised to obey her advice, and left her with words of love and affection, and the assurance that he would return within three days.

The Sultan, meanwhile, was fretting and fuming on account of Ahmed's prolonged absence ; but the most diligent search had not revealed a single trace of his whereabouts.

When at length the errant Prince rode into his father's Capital, he was magnificently accoutred, and being escorted by twenty Cavaliers in richest attire, gave evidence of well-being and wealth such as he had never before possessed.

The Sultan joined his subjects in offering him the heartiest of welcomes, and after expressing his satisfaction and delight in once more embracing his youngest and well-beloved son, demanded the reason of his long absence.

“O my Lord the King,” replied Ahmed, “question me no questions, for though I dwell in joy and contentment, I may reveal naught that hath betided me.” The Sultan, satisfied to have his son beside him, sought not to discover his secret, and so, after three days, Ahmed wished him farewell, and returned to Perie Banou. From this time forth Ahmed spent three days in every month with his sire, and each time he came, his costume, equipage and escort were more splendid than on the previous visit. This magnificence aroused the envy and malice of one of the viziers, who was a favourite of the Sultan’s, and he fell to poisoning the latter’s mind against Prince Ahmed, first by insinuations, and then by open accusations.

“Who can say whence cometh the Prince or how he hath obtained his wealth and magnificence?” whispered the jealous minister in his master’s ear. “Thou knowest,” continued he of the evil tongue, “the youth departed hence in anger at the loss of the Princess Nou-

ronnihar, and now that he returneth with an ever-increasing escort, perchance he plotteth to avenge himself on thee, and will cast thee from the throne. Therefore beware, O King of Kings, beware ! for thou wottest not his power.”

The Sultan, waxing alarmed and most suspicious, sent for a sorceress to aid him, and bade her find out whither the Prince went when he was suddenly lost to sight, after leaving the city gates some distance behind him. On the morning of the day when the Prince was wont to conclude his monthly visit to his sire, the old crone concealed herself in a hollow near by the place where Ahmed found his arrow. From her hiding-place she observed the Prince and his cortège enter the rocky defile and then suddenly disappear as though they had entered some subterranean passage.

“Of a verity,” quoth the beldam, “he hath gone to the abode of the genies and fairies ; in no other way could he have vanished thus from my keen gaze.”

She now ran hither and thither in her endeavour to fix upon the underground passage ; but in vain, for the iron door was invisible to all mortals save Ahmed, who saw it by the grace of Perie Banou.

The sorceress returned to the Capital to await the next visit of the Prince, designing this time to bring the Sultan the required information. When the time drew near, the old crone betook herself to the rock where she had lost sight of the Prince and his retinue, and lay in wait for his appearance. The Prince issued from the iron door followed by a great concourse of attendant genies, and as soon as the sorceress became aware of their approach she fell to moaning and groaning as one in mortal agony.

Ahmed reined in his horse, and bending over enquired what ailed her.

“Alack,” she cried, “I have been seized with a grievous pain and can by no means rise and continue on my way.” The Prince in his compassion ordered one of his cavaliers to take her up before him, and they all turned back to enter the iron door and return to the palace of Perie Banou. The fairy hastened to meet her consort fearing that something was amiss with him; he thereupon assured her that all was well and commended the sick woman to her loving care. Whilst Ahmed was speaking, Perie Banou gazed attentively at the sorceress, and presently bade her women bear the old

dame away and tend her with all possible kindness and diligence.

When the groaning bundle of rags was safely out of earshot, the fairy commended her husband for the kindness of heart which had led him to perform this deed of mercy. Then she added, "O my Lord, I will look to the case of this woman ; but greatly do I fear that evil will come to us through thy good deed. The pain whereof she complaineth is, and I mistake not, but a pretence and a means to some other end. Nevertheless, go thy ways in peace, I will guard thee from harm." The Prince pursued his interrupted journey and was received by the Sultan with outward tokens of joy and pleasure, but his heart was filled with thoughts of fear and misgiving. The sorceress, cared for by Perie Banou's women, was given a potion, which they bade her drink, for it was the precious water of the Fountain of Lions which cures all sickness and pain. She swallowed the liquid and was left to rest upon the bed ; but having found out that which she sought to discover, the sorceress soon sat up and cried aloud, "O the admirable draught, it hath already restored me to health and strength." When the women came in, she declared herself able

to go upon her ways ; but begged them to lead her to the lady first, so that she might express her gratitude. They led her through several sumptuous apartments to a hall of such splendour and magnificence that there was none to equal it in all the rich land of India. Perie Banou was seated here, upon a throne of massive gold adorned with the rarest and most precious stones of surpassing size and lustre.

On either hand stood fairies of peerless beauty, inferior only to that of Perie Banou herself. All this grandeur quite took the old witch aback, and she sank at the foot of the throne unable to utter a word.

The fairy, smiling gently, bade her maidens raise the prostrate figure and said, "O good woman, right glad am I to see thee cured of thy sickness, and able to proceed upon thy journey." She was thereupon dismissed and escorted past the iron door by some of the attendants.

The sorceress assured herself that she was no longer observed and then retraced her footsteps, desiring to make sure of the position of the subterranean passage.

To her chagrin she was unable to find it, although she searched assiduously, and so was

obliged to return to the city without having settled the matter.

At the instigation of the Vizier, whose tool she was, the sorceress did her utmost to provoke the Sultan's jealousy against Prince Ahmed. She succeeded so well, that after she had related her experiences in the realms of Perie Banou, the Sultan was so disturbed that he summoned the Vizier and his friends, to seek their advice.

"The remedy lieth in thine own hands, O King; thou hast but to seize the Prince and cast him into prison," suggested a Minister.

"'Twould be a pretty kettle o' fish for us, an thou didst so foolish a thing!" exclaimed the sorceress; "for prison walls cannot confine his retinue, who being genies can transport themselves wheresoe'er they list, and thus Perie Banou would soon learn of this treachery. Rather turn the Prince's interest with the fairies to thy advantage, O King, and by demanding that which is difficult of attainment thou wilt either gain a gift of value, or should Prince Ahmed fail to acquit himself of the task, thou canst so humble and shame him that he will come here no more." The Sultan hearkened to these words and prepared himself with a request to prefer to the Prince on his next visit.

When Ahmed came, punctual to his wonted time, the Sultan received him with assumed goodwill and felicitations on his marriage.

"It hath reached my ears," quoth he, "that the fairy, thy wife, obeyeth thy lightest request, therefore I pray thee obtain for me a pavilion that I greatly desire. This pavilion must be large enough to shelter all my army and yet small enough to lie within the hollow of a man's hand." Prince Ahmed was much embarrassed by this demand; but promised to do what he could to please his sire. He took a hasty leave and departed at once to pour forth his trouble in Perie Banou's sympathetic ear.

He could in no way account to her in what manner the secret of his marriage had leaked out, or why his father had made this petition, and he looked both troubled and perplexed. His spouse replied, "O my Lord, as I foresaw, the ancient woman thou broughtest here was a witch and spy, and she hath disclosed thy secret; but cast the gloom from thy countenance, for the wiles of the wicked shall harm neither thee nor me. As regards the tent, why trouble thyself about so small a matter? Right gladly will I grant thy father's wish."

She called to Noor-Jehaun, her treasurer,

desiring her to bring such and such a tent, as Ahmed had described, and in a few moments the girl returned with a small case in her hand. From this she produced a miniature pavilion, so small that Ahmed thought, "surely my good Perie Banou mocketh me;" but the fairy, reading his mind, bade Noor-Jehaun spread it out upon the plain, behind the palace.

When the tent was pitched it was so large that two armies with all their baggage and forage could have sheltered within; but when it was struck and folded, its compass was so small that Ahmed held it in his hand as he galloped with all speed to present the gift to the Sultan. Instead of being delighted at the speedy fulfilment of his wish, the Sultan grew more suspicious than ever, and sent for the witch to advise him once more.

She considered awhile and then said, "O King of the Age, send thy son to procure thee the water from the Fountain of Lions, which hath great merit in curing disease; if he fail in the quest he will never again show his face at Court."

The Sultan, under pretext of his failing health, made his second request to Prince Ahmed, saying that he felt sure his son would

not refuse to get him this miraculous water so that his life might be prolonged. The Prince returned to Perie Banou and reluctantly stated his father's further demand. "O Light of my Heart," he cried, "though I tell thee what hath transpired, thou shalt do what it pleaseth thee in the matter, for verily I am ashamed to ask this of thee."

Quoth the fairy, "O my Husband, thy sire shall have no cause of complaint against thee and me, for though he hath been counselled vilely by the wicked witch, he wotteth not that the Fountain is guarded by four lions, fierce and terrible, who tear to pieces all mortals who would pass them. But thou (an Allah be compassionate) shalt gain the water without hurt or harm; only thou must heed my counsel and depart not from it."

She herewith drew a clew of thread from an ivory box, and worked it into a ball with her needle.

"Take this," said she, "and thou wilt presently learn the use of it; furthermore thou shalt have two horses swift and strong, and upon one thou must ride, whilst the other will be laden with a freshly slaughtered sheep, cut into quarters. I shall provide thee with a phial

wherein to bring the water, and at day-dawn thou must ride forth, leading the second horse.

“When the iron door is closed behind thee, cast down the ball of thread, and follow it as it runneth before thee of its own accord. The ball will stop its course within the gates of a castle where the Fountain is situate. Heed not the ramping and roaring of the lions, but throw to each of them a quarter of the sheep with which thou wilt be provided. Ride with thy best speed to the Fountain, fill thy phial and pass out ere the lions have devoured their meat, only so canst thou return safe and sound.”

Prince Ahmed conscientiously followed the fairy's rede, and after throwing the meat to the lions, who appeared most angry and ferocious, he reached the Fountain, obtained the water and passed out with joy and thankfulness. As he turned in his saddle to look behind him, he observed that he was followed by the lions.

He drew out his scimitar to defend himself, whereupon one of the beasts, approaching close, nodded his head and wagged his tail in friendly wise. From that time they escorted the Prince on either side and at the rear, until they reached the Sultan's palace. As the citizens and courtiers beheld the four great beasts, they fled in terror

and hid within their houses, so that the streets were soon as lonesome as the desert. At the door of the palace the lions departed, and the Prince going in, sought audience of the Sultan and laid the phial at his feet. The Sultan expressed his gratitude; but the heart of him was full of envy and ill-feeling towards the son, who had braved great danger to do him service.

Instigated by the sorceress he now demanded a third service of the Prince, and one he deemed impossible of attainment. "One thing more do I require of thee, O Son of mine," said he, "'tis the last and final boon that I will ask. Bring me a dwarf, of height no more than three feet, with a beard not less than twenty ells in length. Upon his shoulder he shall bear a bar of steel thirteen score pounds in weight, which he can twirl about his head and wield as easily as though it were a cudgel of wood."

The Prince left the Palace vexed beyond measure at his sire's outrageous demand, and scarce had courage to tell his loving helpmate of this new request. "Now indeed am I put to shame," said he to her, "for I trow there is no such dwarf in all the world."

"Do not disturb thyself," replied Perie Banou, "this task is neither so difficult nor

so dangerous as the last ; for the dwarf is not far to seek. In a moment I can summon him, for he is none other than my brother Shaibar, a good and affectionate fellow to those he liketh, but with a quick anger for them who kindle his resentment. Fear him not, O my Lord ; though his appearance be uncomely, he will not harm thee."

Said Prince Ahmed, "O Wonder of the World, what care I howsoever he looketh ; so long as he be dear to thee, he shall be to me as friend and kinsman."

Perie Banou cast some incense into a golden chafing-dish and a thick smoke rose therefrom ; whereupon she cried, "Here is Shaibar my brother," and Ahmed perceived a manikin, three feet high, with a lump on his chest, a hump on his back, and a countenance of surprising ugliness. On his right shoulder he bore a quarter staff of steel that weighed thirteen score pounds, and he had a beard twenty ells long.

He glared at the Prince, crying, "O my Sister, who is this mortal I find with thee ? "

"This is Ahmed my beloved consort," she replied. Thereupon Shaibar looked upon the Prince with friendly mien and said, "Is there any service I can render him ? "

“ Yea, O my Brother,” answered Perie Banou, “ for his sire, the Sultan of India, hath a desire to see thee. Ahmed would fain gratify his curiosity, so wilt thou accompany the Prince to the Palace and make thy salaam to the King ? ”

“ Lead on, O Prince,” responded Shaibar, “ and I will follow thee.”

“ Nay, there is no such haste,” cried his sister, and she held him back to tell him privily of the Sultan’s ill-will towards his youngest son, and of the malicious counsels of the witch to which he was ever ready to hearken.

Ahmed and his strange companion reached the Capital at daybreak and demanded audience of the Sultan. The latter received them in his chamber, surrounded by his ministers and courtiers ; but Shaibar was in no wise confounded, he advanced towards the throne and said, “ O King, thou hast desired my presence, and I have come to obey thy summons.” Never had the Sultan seen so hideous a creature, and he held his hands before his eyes to shut out the sight of the dwarf. Shaibar, enraged at this display of pusillanimity and rudeness, raised his staff and brought it down with a resounding thwack upon the Sultan’s head, so that the latter fell stone-dead upon the floor. Shaibar now

turned upon the Vizier and those who had joined in the plot against the Prince, and destroyed them all by a few blows with his mighty staff.

“Now bring me the witch,” yelled the infuriated dwarf; whereupon the affrighted attendants dragged the beldam before him. He raised his staff once again, and despatched the worker of evil, crying, “So will I reward all traitors.” His anger being now appeased, Shaibar led the Prince to the throne and proclaimed him Sultan of all Hindostan. The people took up the cry, and “Long live King Ahmed,” echoed through the streets of the city and was carried from town to town; for all were rejoiced to be governed by Ahmed their best-beloved prince.

Perie Banou was hastily summoned and shared in the splendid ovation accorded to her consort; and well might they all rejoice, for no better Sultan and Sultana ever ruled over a happier or more peaceful people.

Prince Ali and Nouronnihar were awarded the governorship of a fine province; but Prince Houssain refused to leave his humble dwelling where he could spend his days in meditation, untroubled by the world and all its vanities.

ABOU HASSAN, OR THE SLEEPER AWAKENED

IN the reign of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, there lived at Bagdad a very rich merchant. He had one only child, a son, whom he named Abou Hassan, and whom he educated with great strictness. When his son was thirty years old, he became his father's sole heir, and the owner of immense wealth, amassed together by the paternal frugality and application.

Abou Hassan, whose views and inclinations were very different from those of his father, determined to make another use of his wealth. His father had never allowed him any money but what was just necessary for subsistence, and as he had always envied his rich companions, who wanted for nothing, and who debarred themselves from none of those pleasures to which their wealth entitled them, he resolved to distinguish himself by extravagances proportionable to his fortune. To this end he divided his riches into two parts ; with one half he bought houses in the city and farms in the country, with a resolution never to touch the income arising from them, which

was very large, but to lay it all by as he received it. With the other half, which consisted of ready money, he designed to make himself amends for the time he had lost by the severe restraint in which his father had always kept him.

With this intent, Abou Hassan made the acquaintance of wealthy youths of his own age and rank, who thought of nothing but how to make their time pass agreeably. Every day he gave them splendid entertainments, at which the most delicate viands were served up, and the most exquisite wines flowed in profusion, while concerts of the best vocal and instrumental music by performers of both sexes heightened their pleasures. These entertainments, renewed every day, were so expensive to Abou Hassan, that he could not support the extravagance above one year. As soon as he discontinued his feasts, and pleaded poverty as the excuse, his friends forsook him ; whenever they saw him they avoided him, and if by chance he met any of them, and tried to stop them, they always excused themselves on some pretence or other.

Abou Hassan was more affected by this behaviour of his friends, who had forsaken him so basely and ungratefully after all the protestations they had made him of inviolable attachment,

than by the loss of the money he had so foolishly squandered. He went, melancholy and thoughtful, into his mother's apartment, and sat down on the end of a sofa at a distance from her. "What is the matter with you, son?" said his mother, seeing him thus depressed. "Why are you so dejected? You could not certainly be more concerned if you had lost all you had. You have still, however, a good estate. I do not, therefore, see why you should plunge yourself into this deep melancholy."

At these words Abou Hassan melted into tears; and in the midst of his sighs exclaimed, "Ah! mother, how insupportable poverty must be; it deprives us of joy, as the setting of the sun does of light. A poor man is looked upon, both by friends and relations, as a stranger. You know, mother, how I have treated my friends for this year past, and now they have left me when they suppose I can treat them no longer. Bismillah! praise be to God! I have yet my lands and farms, and I shall now know how to use what is left. But I am resolved to try how far my friends, who deserve not that I should call them so, will carry their ingratitude. I will go to them one after another, and when I have represented to them what I have done on their account, ask them to

make up a sum of money to relieve me, merely to try if I can find any sentiment of gratitude remaining in them." Abou Hassan went immediately to his friends, whom he found at home ; represented to them the great need he was in, and begged of them to assist him. He promised to give bonds to pay them the money they might lend him ; giving them to understand at the same time, that it was, in a great measure, on their account that he was so distressed. That he might the more powerfully excite their generosity, he forgot not to allure them with the hopes of being once again entertained in the same manner as before.

Not one of his companions was affected with the arguments which the afflicted Abou Hassan used to persuade them ; and he had the mortification to find that many of them told him plainly they did not know him.

He returned home full of indignation ; and going into his mother's apartment, said, " Ah ! madam, I have found none of my late companions who deserve my friendship ; I renounce them, and promise you I will never see them more." He resolved to be as good as his word, taking an oath never to give an inhabitant of Bagdad any entertainment while he lived. He further vowed that

he would not put in his purse more money than was sufficient to ask a single person to sup with him, who, according to the oath he had taken, was not of Bagdad, but a stranger arrived in the city the same day, and who must take his leave of him the following morning.

Conformably to this plan, Abou Hassan took care every morning to provide whatever was necessary for a repast for two persons, and towards the close of the evening went and sat at the end of Bagdad bridge ; and as soon as he saw a stranger, accosted him civilly, invited him to sup and lodge with him that night ; and after having informed him of the law he had imposed upon himself, conducted him to his house. The supper to which Abou Hassan invited his guests was not costly, but well dressed, with plenty of good wine, and generally lasted till the night was pretty far advanced ; instead of entertaining his guests with the affairs of state, his family, or business, as is too frequent, he conversed on general subjects. He was naturally of a gay and pleasant temper, and made the most melancholy persons merry. When he sent away his guest the next morning, he always said, “ God preserve you from all sorrow wherever you go ; when I invited you yesterday to come and sup with me, I informed you of the

law I have imposed on myself ; therefore do not take it ill if I tell you, that we must never see one another again, nor drink together, either at home or anywhere else, for reasons best known to myself ; so God conduct you.”

Abou Hassan was very exact in the observance of this oath, and never looked upon or spoke to the strangers he had once entertained. If he met them afterwards in the streets, the squares, or any public assemblies, he turned away to avoid them that they might not speak to him, or he have any communication with them. He had acted for a long time in this manner, when, one afternoon, a little before sunset, as he sat upon the bridge according to custom, the Caliph Haroun Alraschid came by, but so disguised that it was impossible to know him ; he was dressed like a merchant of Moussul, and was followed by a tall stout slave.

Abou Hassan, who was looking out for a guest, rose up as he approached, and, after having saluted him with a graceful air, said to him, “ Sir, I congratulate you on your happy arrival in Bagdad ; I beg you to do me the honour to sup with me, and repose yourself at my house for this night, after the fatigue of your journey ; ” he then told him his custom of entertaining the

first stranger he met with. The caliph found something so odd and singular in Abou Hassan's whim, that he was very desirous to know the cause, and told him that he could not better merit a civility, which he did not expect as a stranger, than by accepting the obliging offer made him ; that he had only to lead the way, and he was ready to follow him.

Abou Hassan treated the caliph as his equal, conducted him home, and led him into a room very neatly furnished, where he set him on a sofa, in the most honourable place. Supper was ready, and the cloth laid.

Abou Hassan sat down opposite his guest, and he and the caliph began to eat heartily of what they liked best, without speaking or drinking, according to the custom of the country. When they had done eating, the caliph's slave brought them water to wash their hands : and in the meantime Abou Hassan's mother cleared the table, and brought up a dessert of all the various sorts of fruits then in season, as grapes, peaches, apples, pears, and various pastes of dried almonds, etc. As soon as it grew dark, wax candles were lighted, and Abou Hassan, after requesting his mother to take care of the caliph's slave, set down bottles and glasses.

Abou Hassan filled a glass of wine, and holding it in his hand, said to the caliph, "Now, taste this wine, sir ; I will warrant you find it good." "I am well persuaded of that," replied the caliph, laughing, "you know how to choose the best." "Oh !" replied Abou Hassan, "one need only look in your face to be assured that you have seen the world, and know what good living is. If," added he in Arabic verse, "my house could think and express its joy, how happy would it be to possess you, and bowing before you, would exclaim, 'How overjoyed am I to see myself honoured with the company of so accomplished and polite a personage, and for meeting with a man of your merit !' "

The caliph and Abou Hassan remained together drinking and talking of indifferent subjects, till the night was pretty far advanced, when the caliph said, "I beg of you to let me understand how I may serve you, and you shall see I will not be ungrateful. Speak freely and open your mind, for though I am but a merchant, it may be in my power to oblige you myself, or by some friend."

To these offers Abou Hassan replied, "I can only thank you for your obliging offers, and the honour you have done me in partaking of my frugal fare. Yet I must tell you there is one

thing gives me uneasiness. The imaun of the mosque situated in the district in which I live, is the greatest of hypocrites. He and four of his friends try to lord it over me and the whole neighbourhood. I should like to be caliph but for one day, in the stead of our sovereign lord and master, Haroun Alraschid, Commander of the Faithful. I would punish the imaun and his four friends with a hundred strokes each on the soles of their feet, to teach them not to disturb and abuse their neighbours in future."

The caliph was extremely pleased with this thought of Abou Hassan's; and while Abou Hassan was talking, he took the bottle and two glasses, and filling his own first, saying, "Here is a cup of thanks to you," and then filling the other, put into it artfully a little opiate powder, which he had about him, and giving it to Abou Hassan, said, "You have taken the pains to fill for me all night, and it is the least I can do to save you the trouble once: I beg you to take this glass; drink it off for my sake."

Abou Hassan took the glass, and to show his guest with how much pleasure he received the honour, drank it off at once. Scarcely had he set the glass upon the table, when the powder began to operate, and he fell into a sound sleep. The

caliph commanded the slave who waited for him to take Abou Hassan and carry him directly to the palace, and to undress him and put him into his own state bed. This was immediately performed.

The caliph next sent for the grand vizier. "Giafar," said he, "I have sent for you to instruct you, and to prevent your being surprised to-morrow when you come to audience, at seeing this man seated on my throne in the royal robes; accost him with the same reverence and respect as you pay to myself; observe and punctually execute whatever he bids you do, the same as if I commanded you. He will exercise great liberality, and commission you with the distribution of it. Do all he commands; even if his liberality should extend so far as to empty all the coffers in my treasury; and remember to acquaint all my emirs, and officers within the palace, to pay him the same honour at audience as to myself, and to carry on the matter so well, that he may not perceive the least thing that may interrupt the diversion which I design myself. Above all, fail not to awaken me before Abou Hassan, because I wish to be present when he awakes."

The vizier failed not to do as the caliph had

commanded, and as soon as the caliph had dressed, he went into the room where Abou Hassan lay, and placed himself in a little raised closet, from whence he could see all that passed. All the officers and ladies, who were to attend Abou Hassan's levee, went in at the same time, and took their posts according to their rank, ready to acquit themselves of their respective duties, as if the caliph himself had been going to rise.

As it was just daybreak, and time to prepare for the morning prayer before sunrise, the officer who stood nearest to the head of the bed put a sponge steeped in vinegar to Abou Hassan's nose, who immediately awoke. When Abou Hassan opened his eyes, he saw by the dawning light a large room, magnificently furnished with a finely painted ceiling, adorned with vases of gold and silver, and the floor covered with a rich silk tapestry, and many slaves richly clothed, all standing with great modesty and respect. After casting his eyes on the covering of the bed, he perceived it was cloth of gold richly embossed with pearls and diamonds ; and near the bed lay, on a cushion, a habit of tissue embroidered with jewels, with a caliph's turban.

At the sight of this splendour, Abou Hassan was in the most inexpressible amazement. He

looked upon all he saw as a dream ; yet a dream he wished it not to be. “ So,” said he to himself, “ I am caliph ! But,” added he, recollecting himself, “ it is only a dream, the effect of the wish I entertained my guest with last night ; and then he turned himself about and shut his eyes to sleep.” At the same time the vizier said, with a prostration to the ground, “ Commander of the Faithful, it is time for your majesty to rise to prayers, the morning begins to advance.”

These words very much surprised Abou Hassan. He clapped his hands before his eyes, and lowering his head, said to himself, “ What means all this ? Where am I ? and to whom does this palace belong ? What can these viziers, emirs, officers, and musicians mean ? How is it possible for me to distinguish whether I am in my right senses or in a dream ? ”

When he took his hands from his eyes, opened them, and lifted up his head, the sun shone full in at the chamber window ; and at that instant Mesrour, the chief of the office, came in, prostrated himself before Abou Hassan, and said, “ Commander of the Faithful, your majesty will excuse me for representing to you, that you used not to rise so late, and that the time of prayer is over. It is time to ascend your throne and hold a council

as usual ; all the great officers of state wait your presence in the council-hall."

At this discourse, Abou Hassan was persuaded that he was neither asleep nor in a dream ; but at the same time was not less embarrassed and confused under his uncertainty what steps to take : at last, looking earnestly at Mesrour, he said to him in a serious tone, " Whom is it you speak to, and call the Commander of the Faithful ? I do not know you, and you must mistake me for somebody else."

" My imperial lord and master," said he, " is not your majesty the Commander of the Faithful, Monarch of the world from east to west, and Vicar on earth to the Prophet sent of God ? Mesrour your poor slave has not forgotten you, after so many years that he has had the honour and happiness to serve and pay his respects to your majesty."

Abou Hassan burst out a-laughing at these words, and fell backwards upon the bolster, which pleased the caliph so much that he would have laughed as loud himself, if he had not been afraid of putting a stop too soon to the pleasant scene he had promised himself.

Abou Hassan, when he had tired himself with laughing, sat up again, and suddenly calling the

officer that stood nearest to him, "Come hither," said he, holding out his hand, "bite the end of my finger, that I may feel whether I am asleep or awake."

The slave, who knew the caliph saw all that passed, and being anxious to please him, went with a grave countenance, and putting his finger between his teeth, bit it so hard that he put him to great pain. Snatching his hand quickly back again, he said, "I find I am awake: I feel, and hear, and see, and thus know that I am not asleep. But by what miracle am I become Caliph in a night's time?"

Abou Hassan now beginning to rise, the chief of the officers offered him his hand, and helped him to get out of bed. No sooner were his feet set on the floor, than the chamber rang with the repeated salutations of those present, who cried out all together, "Commander of the Faithful, God give your majesty a good day." "O Heaven!" cried Abou Hassan, "what a strange thing this is! Last night I was Abou Hassan, and this morning I am the Commander of the Believers! I cannot comprehend this sudden and surprising change." Presently some of the officers began to dress him; and when they had done, led him through all the attendants, who were

ranged on both sides, quite to the council-chamber door, which was opened by one of the officers. Mesrour walked before him to the foot of the throne, where he stopped, and putting one hand under one arm, while another officer who followed did the same by the other, they helped him to ascend the throne. Abou Hassan sat down amidst the acclamations of the officers, who wished him all happiness and prosperity, and turning to the right and left, he saw the royal guards ranged in order.

The Caliph in the meantime came out of the closet, and went into another, which looked into the hall, from whence he could see and hear all that passed in council, where his grand vizier presided in his place. What pleased him highly, was to see Abou Hassan fill his throne with almost as much gravity as himself.

As soon as Abou Hassan had seated himself, the grand vizier prostrated himself at the foot of the throne, and rising, said, "Commander of the Faithful, God shower down blessings on your majesty in this life, receive you into His paradise in the other world, and confound your enemies."

Abou Hassan, after all that had happened that morning, at these words of the grand vizier, never doubted but that he was Caliph, as he wished to

be ; and without examining any further, how or by what adventure, or sudden change of fortune, he had become so, immediately began to exercise his power, and looking very gravely at the vizier, asked him what he had to say. “Commander of the Faithful,” replied the grand vizier, “the emirs, viziers, and other officers of your council, wait without till your majesty gives them leave to pay their accustomed respects.” Abou Hassan ordered the door to be opened, on which the viziers, emirs, and principal officers of the court, all dressed magnificently in their habits of ceremony, went in their order to the foot of the throne, paid their respects to Abou Hassan ; and bowing their heads down to the carpet, saluted him with the title of Commander of the Faithful, according to the instructions of the grand vizier, and afterwards took their seats.

When this ceremony was over, there was a profound silence. The grand vizier standing before the throne, began to make his report of affairs. The Caliph could not but admire how Abou Hassan acquitted himself in his exalted station without the least hesitation or embarrassment, and decided well in all matters, as his own good sense suggested. But before the grand vizier had finished his report, Abou Hassan perceived the

cadi, whom he knew by sight, sitting in his place : “ Stop,” said he to the grand vizier, interrupting him ; “ I have an order of consequence to give to the cadi.” The cadi, perceiving that Abou Hassan looked at him, and hearing his name mentioned, arose from his seat and went gravely to the foot of the throne, where he prostrated himself with his face to the ground. “ Go immediately,” said Abou Hassan, “ to such a quarter, where you will find a mosque, seize the imaun and four old men, his friends, and give each of them a hundred bastinadoes. After that, mount them all five, clothed in rags, on camels, with their faces to the tails, and lead them through the whole city, with a crier before them, who shall proclaim with a loud voice,—‘ This is the punishment of all those who interfere in other people’s affairs.’ Make them also leave that quarter, and never set foot on it more. And while your lieutenant is conducting them through the town, return and give me an account of the execution of my orders.” The judge of the police laid his hand upon his head, to show his obedience, and prostrating himself a second time, retired to execute the mandate.

Abou Hassan then, addressing himself to the grand vizier, said, “ Go to the high treasurer for a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, and carry it to

the mother of one Abou Hassan ; she lives in the same quarter to which I sent the judge of the police. Go, and return immediately."

The grand vizier, after laying his hand upon his head, and prostrating himself before the throne, went to the high treasurer, who gave him the money, which he ordered a slave to take, and to follow him to Abou Hassan's mother, to whom he gave it, saying only, " The Caliph makes you this present." She received it with the greatest surprise imaginable.

During the grand vizier's absence, the judge of the police made the usual report of his office, which lasted till the vizier returned. As soon as he came into the council-chamber, and had assured Abou Hassan that he had executed his orders, he made a sign to the viziers, the emirs, and other officers, that the council was over, and that they might all retire ; which they did, by making the same prostration at the foot of the throne as when they entered.

Abou Hassan descended from the Caliph's throne, and was conducted with much ceremony into a magnificent hall. In this hall was a table covered with massive gold plates and dishes, which scented the apartment with the spices and amber wherewith the meat was seasoned ; and seven

young and most beautiful ladies, dressed in the richest habits, stood round this table, each with a fan in her hand, to fan Abou Hassan when at dinner.

If ever mortal was charmed, Abou Hassan was when he entered this stately hall. At every step he took he could not help stopping to contemplate at leisure all the wonders that regaled his eyes, and turned first to one side, and then to the other ; which gave the Caliph, who viewed him with attention, very great pleasure. At last he sat down at the table, and presently all the ladies began to fan the new Caliph. He looked first at one, then at another, and admired the grace with which they acquitted themselves. He told them with a smile that he believed one of them was enough to give him all the air he wanted, and would have six of the ladies sit at table with him, three on his right hand, and three on his left.

The six ladies obeyed ; and Abou Hassan taking notice that out of respect they did not eat, helped them himself, and invited them to eat in the most pressing and obliging terms. Afterwards he asked their names, which they told him were Alabaster Neck, Coral Lips, Moon Face, Sun-shine, Eye's Delight, Heart's Delight, and she who fanned him was Sugar Cane. The many soft

things he said upon their names showed him to be a man of sprightly wit, and it is not to be conceived how much it increased the esteem which the Caliph (who saw everything) had already conceived for him.

When the ladies observed that Abou Hassan had done eating, one of them said to the slaves who waited, "The Commander of the Faithful will go into the hall where the dessert is laid ; bring some water ;" upon which they all rose from the table, and taking from the slaves, one a gold basin, another a ewer of the same metal, and a third a towel, kneeled before Abou Hassan, and presented them to him to wash his hands. As soon as he had done, he got up and went, preceded by the chief officer, who never left him, into another hall, as large as the former, adorned with paintings by the best artists, and furnished with gold and silver vessels, carpets and other rich furniture. There the Sultan's musicians began a serenade as soon as Abou Hassan appeared. In this hall there were seven large lustres, a table in the middle covered with dried sweetmeats, the choicest and most exquisite fruits of the season, raised in pyramids, in seven gold basins ; and seven other beautiful ladies standing round it, each with a fan in her hand.

These new objects raised still greater admiration in Abou Hassan, who, after he had made a full stop, and given the most sensible marks of surprise and astonishment, went directly to the table, where, sitting down, he gazed a considerable time at the seven ladies, with an embarrassment that plainly showed he knew not to which to give the preference. At last he ordered them all to lay aside their fans, and sit down, and eat with him, telling them that it was not so hot but he could spare them that trouble.

When the ladies were all placed about him, the first thing he did was to ask their names, which were different from the other seven, and expressed some perfection of mind or body which distinguished them from one another ; upon which he took an opportunity, when he presented them with fruit, etc., to say something gallant. By these sallies Abou Hassan more and more amused the Caliph, who was delighted with his words and actions, and pleased to think he had found in him a man who diverted him so agreeably.

By this time, the day beginning to close, Abou Hassan was conducted into a fourth hall, much more superb and magnificently furnished, and lighted with wax in seven gold lustres, which gave a splendid light. Abou Hassan found there what

he had not observed in any of the other halls, a buffet, set out with seven large silver flagons, full of the choicest wines, and by them seven crystal glasses of the finest workmanship.

Hitherto, in the three first halls, Abou Hassan had drunk nothing but water, according to the custom observed at Bagdad, from the highest to the lowest, at the Caliph's court, never to drink wine till the evening.

As soon as Abou Hassan entered the fourth hall, he went to the table, sat down, and was a long time in a kind of ecstasy at the sight which surrounded him, and which was much more beautiful than anything he had beheld in the other halls. He was desirous to continue his conversation with the ladies, his fair attendants, and he clapped his hands for the musicians to cease. A profound silence ensued. Taking by the hand the lady who stood on the right next to him, he made her sit down by him, and presenting her with a cake, asked her name. "Commander of the Faithful," said the lady, "I am called Cluster of Pearls." "No name," replied Abou Hassan, "could have more properly expressed your worth; and indeed your teeth exceed the finest pearls. Cluster of Pearls," added he, "since that is your name, oblige me with a glass of wine from your

fair hand." The lady went to the buffet, and brought him a glass of wine, which she presented to him with a pleasant air. Abou Hassan took the glass with a smile, and said, "Cluster of Pearls, I drink your health."

After Abou Hassan had drunk, he made another lady sit down by him, and presenting her with what she chose in the basins, asked her name, which she told him was Morning Star. "Your bright eyes," said he, "shine with greater lustre than that star whose name you bear. Do me the pleasure to bring me some wine," which she did with the best grace in the world. Then turning to the third lady, whose name was Daylight, he ordered her to do the same, and so on to the seventh, to the extreme satisfaction of the Caliph.

When they had all filled him a glass round, Cluster of Pearls, whom he had just addressed, went to the buffet, poured out a glass of wine, and putting in a pinch of the same powder the Caliph had used the night before, presented it to Abou Hassan. "Commander of the Faithful," said she, "I beg of your majesty to take this glass of wine, and before you drink it, do me the favour to hear a song I have composed to-day, and which, I flatter myself, will not displease you."

When the lady had concluded, Abou Hassan drank off his glass, and turned his head towards her, to give her those praises which he thought she merited, but was prevented by the opiate ; for in a moment, dropping his head on the cushions, he slept as profoundly as the day before, when the caliph had given him the powder. One of the ladies stood ready to catch the glass, which fell out of his hand ; and then the Caliph, who enjoyed greater satisfaction in this scene than he had promised himself, and was all along a spectator of what had passed, came into the hall to them, overjoyed at the success of his plan. He ordered Abou Hassan to be dressed in his own clothes, and carried back to his house, and to be replaced in his usual bed.

Abou Hassan slept till very late the next morning. When the powder was worked off, he awoke, opened his eyes, and finding himself at home, was in the utmost surprise. “Cluster of Pearls, Morning Star, Coral Lips, Moon face,” cried he, calling the ladies of the palace by their names, as he remembered them, “where are you ? Come hither.”

Abou Hassan called so loud that his mother, who was in her own apartment, heard him, and running to him upon the noise he made, said,

“What ails you, son? what has happened to you?” At these words Abou Hassan lifted up his head, and looking haughtily at his mother, said, “Good woman, who is it you call son?” “Why, you,” answered his mother, very mildly; “are not you Abou Hassan, my son? It is strange that you have forgotten yourself so soon.” “I your son!” replied Abou Hassan. “You know not what you say. I am not Abou Hassan, I tell you, but the Commander of the Faithful; and you shall never persuade me to the contrary!” “Pray, son,” said the mother, “let us leave off this discourse. Let us talk of something else. I will tell you what happened yesterday in our quarter to the imaun of the mosque, and the four sheiks, our neighbours. The cadi came and seized them, and gave each of them I know not how many strokes with a bastinado, while a crier proclaimed, that such was the punishment of all those who troubled themselves about other people’s business. He afterwards led them through all the streets, and ordered them never to come into our quarter again.”

Abou Hassan no sooner heard this relation, but he cried out, “Know then that it was by my order the imaun and the four sheiks were punished; and I tell you I am the Commander of the Faithful,

and all thy arguments shall not convince me of the contrary."

The mother, who could not imagine why her son so positively maintained himself to be Caliph, no longer doubted but that he had lost his senses, and in this thought said, "I pray God, son, to have mercy upon you, and to give you grace to talk more reasonably. What would the world say to hear you rave in this manner?"

These remonstrances only enraged Abou Hassan the more; and he was so provoked that he lost all the respect due from a son to his mother. Getting up hastily, and laying hold of a cane, he ran to his mother in great fury, and said, "Tell me directly who I am." "I do not believe, son," replied she, looking at him tenderly, and without fear, "that you are so abandoned by God as not to know your mother, who brought you into the world, and to mistake yourself. You are indeed my son Abou Hassan, and are much in the wrong to arrogate to yourself the title which belongs only to our sovereign lord the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, especially after the noble and generous present of a thousand pieces of gold that he sent us yesterday!"

At these words Abou Hassan grew quite mad. "Well," cried he, "will you be convinced when I

tell you that I sent you those thousand pieces of gold, as I was Commander of the Faithful? Why then do you maintain with such obstinacy that I am your son? But you shall not go unpunished." After these words, in the height of his frenzy he beat her with his cane.

The poor mother, who could not understand her son, called out for help so loud, that the neighbours ran in to her assistance. Abou Hassan continued to beat her, at every stroke asking her if he was the Commander of the Faithful; to which she always answered tenderly that he was her son.

On hearing her cries for help, the neighbours came in and remonstrated with Abou Hassan on his conduct, and claimed acquaintance with him. He said to them, "Begone! I neither know her nor you. I am not Abou Hassan; I am the Commander of the Faithful, and will make you feel it to your cost."

At this speech, the neighbours, no longer doubting that he was mad, seized him, bound him hand and foot, and conducted him to the hospital for mad people, where he was lodged in a grated cell, and beaten with fifty strokes of the bastinado on his shoulders. This punishment was repeated every day, and each time the executioner bade him

remember that he was not the Commander of the Faithful.

Abou Hassan's mother went every day to visit her son, and could not forbear weeping at the hardships he endured. These practical proofs that he was not the Caliph began to have their effect on Abou Hassan. Sometimes he would say to himself, "If I was Caliph and Commander of the Faithful, why should the grand vizier, and all those emirs and governors of provinces, who prostrated themselves at my feet, forsake me? How came I at home dressed in my own robes? Certainly I ought to look upon all as a dream. But yet there are so many things about it that I cannot comprehend, that I will put my trust in God, who knows all things."

Abou Hassan was taken up with these thoughts and reflections when his mother came to see him. "Well, my son," said she, wiping her tears, "how do you do, and how do you find yourself?" "Indeed, mother," replied Abou Hassan, very rationally and calmly, "I acknowledge my error. I have been deceived by a dream; but by so extraordinary a one, and so like to truth, that while I am speaking I can hardly persuade myself but that what befell me was matter of fact. But whatever it was, I am convinced that I am not

the Caliph and Commander of the Faithful, but Abou Hassan your son." "My son!" cried she, transported with pleasure, "to hear you talk so reasonably gives me as much joy as if I had brought you into the world a second time; but I must tell you my opinion of this adventure. I fear the stranger whom you brought home the evening before your illness to sup with you threw you into the horrible illusion you have been in; therefore, my son, you ought to return God thanks for your deliverance, and beseech Him to keep you from falling again under the enchantments of magic." Upon this his mother went immediately to the keeper, who came, examined, and released him in her presence.

When Abou Hassan came home, he recovered his strength, and within a few days resumed the same plan he had before pursued, of regaling a stranger at night. On the first day on which Abou Hassan renewed his former custom, he had not been long arrived at the bridge, when he perceived the Mussulman merchant, followed by the same slave. Persuaded that all his misfortunes were owing to the merchant, he shuddered at the sight of him. "God preserve me!" said he to himself; "if I am not deceived, there is again the magician who enchanted me!" He trembled

with agitation, and resolved not to see him till he was past.

The Caliph had taken care to inform himself of all that had happened to Abou Hassan, and was glad to learn that he had returned to his usual manner of living. He perceived Abou Hassan at the same time that he saw him, and when he came nigh him he looked him in the face. "Ho, brother Abou Hassan," said he, "is it you?—I greet you! Give me leave to embrace you?" "Not I," replied Abou Hassan, "I do not greet you; I will have neither your greeting nor your embraces. Go, I say, about your business."

The Caliph was not to be diverted from his purpose by this rude behaviour. He knew well the law Abou Hassan had imposed on himself, never to have commerce again with a stranger he had once entertained, but pretended to be ignorant of it.

"Ah! brother Abou Hassan," replied the Caliph, embracing him, "I do not intend to part with you thus, since I have had the good fortune to meet with you a second time; you must exercise the same hospitality towards me again that you showed me a month ago, when I had the honour to drink with you."

Abou Hassan, notwithstanding his resolution

never to admit the same stranger a second time, could not resist the caresses of the Caliph, whom he still took for a merchant of Moussul. "I will consent," said he, "on one condition, that you dispense with your good wishes, and that you promise to form none for me. All the mischief that has hitherto befallen me arose from those you expressed for me." "Well," replied the Caliph, "since you will have it so, I promise you I will form none." "You give me pleasure by speaking so," said Abou Hassan; "I desire no more; I shall be more than satisfied provided you keep your word, and I shall forgive you all the rest."

As soon as Abou Hassan entered his house, he called for his mother and for candles, desired his guest to sit down upon a sofa, and then placed himself beside him. A little time after, supper was brought up, and they both began to eat without ceremony. When they had done Abou Hassan's mother cleared the table, set on a small dessert of fruit, wine, and glasses by her son, then withdrew and appeared no more. Abou Hassan first filled out his own glass and then the Caliph's; and after they had drunk some time, and talked of indifferent matters, "It is great pity," said the Caliph, "that so gallant a man as you, who owns himself not insensible of love, should lead so

solitary a life.” “ I prefer the easy quiet life I live,” replied Abou Hassan, “ before the company of a wife, who might not please me. I should require beauty, accomplishments, the art of pleasing, and wit in conversation ; but where is such a woman to be found except in the Caliph’s palace ? ” “ Let me alone,” said the disguised merchant in reply, “ since you have the same good taste as every other honest man, I warrant you I will find you a wife that shall please you.” Then taking Abou Hassan’s glass, and putting a pinch of the same powder into it, he filled him up a bumper, and presenting it to him, said, “ Come, let us drink beforehand the fair lady’s health, who is to make you happy. I am sure you will like her.”

Abou Hassan took the glass laughing, and shaking his head, said, “ Be it so, since you desire it ; I cannot be guilty of so great a piece of incivility, nor disoblige a guest of so much merit in such a trifling matter. I will drink the health of the lady you promise me, though I am very well contented as I am, and do not rely on your keeping your word.” No sooner had Abou Hassan drunk off his bumper than he fell into as deep a sleep as before ; and the Caliph ordered the same slave to take him and carry him to the palace.

When they arrived at the palace, the Caliph ordered Abou Hassan to be dressed in the same robes in which he had acted as Caliph, and to be laid on a sofa in the fourth hall from whence he had been carried home fast asleep a month before. He then charged all the viziers, officers, ladies, and musicians who were in the hall, when he drank the last glass of wine which had put him to sleep, to be there by daybreak, and to take care to act their parts well when he should awake. He then retired to rest, charging Mesrour to awake him first, that he might conceal himself in the closet as before.

Things being thus disposed, and the Caliph's powder having had its effect, Abou Hassan began to awake. At that instant the hautboys, fifes, flutes, and other instruments commenced a very agreeable concert. Abou Hassan was in great surprise to hear the delightful harmony; but when he opened his eyes, and saw the ladies and officers about him, and the gorgeous chamber which he had visited in his first dream, his amazement increased.

When the concert ceased, and all the officers of the chamber waited, in profound and respectful silence, Abou Hassan bit his finger, and cried loud enough for the Caliph to hear him, " Alas ! I am

fallen again into the same dream that happened to me a month ago, and must expect again the bastinado and grated cell at the madhouse. He was a wicked man that I entertained at my house last night, who has been the cause of this illusion, and the hardships I must again undergo. Great God! I commit myself into Thy hands; preserve me from the temptation of Satan." On saying this he resolved to go to sleep again, and to regard all he saw as a dream. They did not give him time to do this, for one of the officers taking him by one arm, and a second by the other, they lifted him up, and carried him into the middle of the hall, where they seated him, and all taking hands, danced and skipped round him while the music played, and sounded loudly in his ears.

Abou Hassan, having commanded silence, fell into a great perplexity, and inquired whether he were indeed the Caliph. On being informed that he had never been out of that hall since the time he fell asleep in it, he then uncovered his shoulders, and showed the ladies the livid weals of the blows he had received. "Look," said he, "and judge whether these strokes could come to me in a dream, or when I was asleep. For my part, I can affirm that they were real blows; I feel the smart of them yet, and that is a sure testimony.

Now, if I received these strokes in my sleep, in this hall, it is the most extraordinary thing in the world, and surpasses my comprehension."

In this uncertainty, Abou Hassan called to one of the officers that stood near him, "Come hither," said he, "and bite the tip of my ear, that I may know whether I am asleep or awake." The officer obeyed, and bit so hard that he made him cry out loudly with the pain ; the music struck up at the same time, and the officers and ladies all began to sing, dance, and skip about Abou Hassan, and made such a noise that he was the more convinced that he was the subject of a pleasantry ; and joining in the joke, he threw off his Caliph's habit and his turban, jumped up in his shirt and drawers, danced with the rest, jumping, and cutting capers, so that the Caliph could not contain himself, but burst into violent laughter ; and putting his head into the room, cried, " Abou Hassan, Abou Hassan, have you a mind to kill me with laughing ? "

As soon as the Caliph's voice was heard everybody was silent, and Abou Hassan, turning his head to see from whence the voice came, recognised the Moussul merchant, and knew him to be the Caliph. He was not in the least daunted. On the contrary, he saw at once all that had happened

to him, and entered into the Caliph's humour. "Ha! ha!" said he, looking at him with good assurance, "you pretend to be a merchant of Moussul, and complain that I would kill you. Ye have made me beat my mother, and to lose my senses, and have been the occasion of all my misfortunes. I beg of you to tell me what you did to disturb my brain in this manner; I would know, that I may perfectly recover my senses."

"You will remember," said the Caliph, "the evening that you invited me to supper, in our conversation you told me that the only thing you wished for was to be Caliph for four-and-twenty hours. I saw in this desire of yours a fruitful source of diversion to me and to my court, and I determined to procure for you the fulfilment of your wish. By means of a strong opiate which I put, without your knowledge, in the last glass I presented to you, I had you conveyed to my palace. You know the rest. I am sorry that my pastime should have caused you so much suffering, but I will do all I can to make you amends. Thou art my brother; ask what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it."

"Commander of the Faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "how great soever my tortures may have been, they are all blotted out of my remembrance,

since my sovereign lord and master had a share in them. The only boon I would beg is that I may have access to your person, to enjoy the happiness of admiring, all my lifetime, your virtues."

Upon leaving, the Caliph ordered a rich robe to be brought, and assigned him an office in the palace, and directed the treasurer to give him a purse of a thousand gold pieces, and to allow him at all times access to his person.

Abou Hassan made a low prostration, and the Caliph left him to go to his divan.

Abou Hassan returned home, and informed his mother of his good fortune, and that his story was not all a dream ; for that he had actually been Caliph, had acted as such, and received all the honours ; and that this had been confirmed by the Caliph himself.

Abou Hassan was, as we have seen, a man of a pleasant temper and ready wit, and the Caliph often had him at court, and took him to visit his Queen Zobeide, to whom he had related his story. Now Zobeide soon observed that every time he came with the Caliph, he had his eyes always fixed upon one of her attendants, called Nouzhatoul-aouadat. "Commander of the Faithful," said she one day, "you do not observe that every time Abou Hassan attends you in your visits to me, he

never keeps his eyes off Nouzhatoul-aouadat, and pays her great attention. If you approve of it, we will make a match between them."

"Madam," replied the Caliph, "I have already promised Abou Hassan a wife; but it is better that he should choose for himself."

Abou Hassan threw himself at the Caliph's and Zobeide's feet, and rising up, said, "I cannot receive a wife from better hands, but dare not hope that Nouzhatoul-aouadat will give her consent." At these words he looked at the Princess's slave, who showed by her respectful silence, and the sudden blush that arose in her cheeks, that she was disposed to obey the Caliph and her mistress Zobeide.

The nuptials were celebrated in the palace with great rejoicings, which lasted several days. Zobeide made her slave considerable presents, and the Caliph did the same to Abou Hassan. The bride was conducted to the apartment the Caliph had assigned Abou Hassan, who received her with the sound of all sorts of instruments, and musicians of both sexes, who made the air echo with their concert.

Abou Hassan and his spouse were charmed with each other. Indeed, Nouzhatoul-aouadat was just such a wife as he had described to the Caliph.

After their marriage, they gave costly entertainments, and each vied with the other in sparing no expense for the amusement of their friends, until, at the end of the first year of their marriage, they had expended all the presents given by the Sultan and Zobeide, as well as the patrimony inherited by Abou Hassan.

Being in great straits, and willing neither to forego their manner of life nor to ask the Sultan or Zobeide for further presents, they took secret counsel together, when Abou Hassan resolved both to put a pleasant trick on the Caliph and on Zobeide, and to obtain from them the means of carrying on his usual mode of living. "I will tell you what I propose," said he to Nouzhatoul-aouadat. "I will feign myself to be dead, and you shall place me in the middle of my chamber, with my turban upon my face, my feet towards Mecca, as if ready to be carried out to burial. When you have done this, you must weep, tear your clothes and hair, and go all in tears, with your locks dishevelled, to Zobeide. The Princess will of course inquire the cause of your grief; and when you have told her, she will pity you, give you money to defray the expense of my funeral, and a piece of good brocade, in the room of that you will have torn. As soon as you

return with the money and the brocade, I will rise, lay you in my place, and go and act the same part with the Caliph, who, I dare say, will be as generous to me as Zobeide will have been to you."

Nouzhatoul-aouadat highly approved the project, and having acted upon her husband's suggestion and placed him as he desired, she pulled off her head-dress, and with a dismal cry and lamentation, beating her face and breast with all the marks of the most lively grief, ran across the court to Zobeide's apartments.

The Princess, amazed to see her slave in such extraordinary affliction, asked what had happened; but, instead of answering, she continued her sobs; and at last, feigning to strive to check them, said, with words interrupted with sighs, "Alas! my most honoured mistress, what greater misfortune could have befallen me? Abou Hassan! poor Abou Hassan! whom you honoured with your esteem, and gave me for a husband, is no more!"

Zobeide was extremely concerned at this news, and after having expressed her sorrow, commanded her women to fetch a hundred pieces of gold and a rich cloth of gold, and to give them to Nouzhatoul-aouadat, who threw herself again at

the Princess's feet, and thanked her with great self-satisfaction at finding she had succeeded so well.

As soon as Nouzhatoul-aouadat got out of the Princess's presence, she dried up her tears, and returned with joy to Abou Hassan. Unable to contain herself at the success of her artifice, "Come, husband," said she, laughing, "now do you hasten and see if you can manage the Caliph as well as I have done Zobeide."

"That is the temper of all women," replied Abou Hassan, "who, we may well say, have always the vanity to believe they can do things better than men, though at the same time what good they do is by their advice. It would be odd indeed if I, who laid this plot myself, could not carry it on as well as you. But let us lose no time in idle discourse; lie down in my place, and witness if I do not come off with as much applause."

Abou Hassan wrapped up his wife as she had done him, and with his turban unrolled, like a man in the greatest affliction, ran to the Caliph. He presented himself at the door, and the officer, knowing he had free access, opened it. He entered holding with one hand his handkerchief before his eyes, to hide the feigned tears, and struck

his breast with the other, and uttered exclamations expressing extraordinary grief.

The Caliph, always used to see Abou Hassan with a merry countenance, inquired with much concern the cause of his grief. "Commander of the Faithful," answered Abou Hassan, with repeated sighs and sobs, "may you long reign! A greater calamity could not have befallen me than what I now lament. Alas! Nouzhatoul-aouadat! my wife, alas! alas!"

The Caliph, who now understood that Abou Hassan came to tell him of the death of his wife, seemed much concerned, and said to him with an air which showed how much he regretted her loss, "God be merciful to her! She was a good slave, and we gave her to you with an intention to make you happy: she deserved a longer life." And having said this, he ordered his treasurer, who was present, to give Abou Hassan a purse of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade. Abou Hassan immediately cast himself at the Caliph's feet, and thanked him for his present. As soon as he had got the purse and piece of brocade, he went home, well pleased with having found out so quick and easy a way of supplying the necessity which had given him so much uneasiness.

Nouzhatoul-aouadat, as soon as she heard the door open, sprang up, ran to her husband, and asked him if he had imposed on the Caliph as cleverly as she had done on Zobeide. "You see!" said he, showing her the stuff, and shaking the purse.

The Caliph was so impatient to condole with the Princess on the death of her slave, that he rose up as soon as Abou Hassan was gone. "Follow me," said he to the vizier; "let us go and share with the princess the grief which the death of her slave Nouzhatoul-aouadat must have occasioned."

Accordingly they went to Zobeide's apartment, whom the Caliph found sitting on a sofa, much afflicted, and still in tears. "Madam," said the Caliph, "I wish to tell you how much I partake with you in your affliction in your loss of Nouzhatoul-aouadat, your faithful slave." "Commander of the Faithful," replied Zobeide, "I do not lament my slave's death, but that of Abou Hassan, her husband." "Madam," said the Caliph, "I tell you that you are deceived; Nouzhatoul-aouadat is dead, and Abou Hassan is alive, and in perfect health."

Zobeide, much piqued at this answer of the Caliph, replied, "Permit me to repeat, once more, that it is Abou Hassan who is dead, and that my

slave Nouzhatoul-aouadat, his widow, is living. It is not an hour since she went from hence, having told me her affliction. All my women, who wept with me, can bear me witness that I made her a present of a hundred pieces of gold and a piece of brocade ; the grief which you found me in was on account of the death of her husband ; and just at the instant you entered, I was going to send you a compliment of condolence."

At these words of Zobeide, the Caliph cried out in a fit of laughter, " This, madam, is a strange piece of obstinacy ; but," continued he, seriously, " you may depend upon Nouzhatoul-aouadat's being dead." " I tell you no, sir," replied Zobeide ; " it is Abou Hassan that is dead, and you shall never make me believe otherwise."

Upon this the Caliph's anger rose in his countenance, and he ordered the vizier to go at once and ascertain the truth and bring him word. No sooner was the vizier gone, than the Caliph, addressing himself to Zobeide, said, " You will see in a moment which of us is right." " For my part," replied Zobeide, " I know very well that I am in the right, and you will find it to be Abou Hassan." " And for myself," returned the Caliph, " I am so sure that it is Nouzhatoul-aouadat, that I will stake my garden of pleasures against your palace

of paintings, though the one is worth much more than the other." "I accept the wager," said Zobeide, "and will abide by it." The Caliph declared the same intention; and both awaited the vizier's return.

While the Caliph and Zobeide were disputing so earnestly, and with so much warmth, Abou Hassan, who foresaw their difference, was very attentive to whatever might happen. As soon as he perceived the vizier through a window, at which he sat talking with his wife, and observed that he was coming directly to their apartment, he guessed his commission, and bade his wife make haste to act the part they had agreed on, without loss of time. They were so pressed, that Abou Hassan had much ado to wrap up his wife, and lay the piece of brocade which the Caliph had given him upon her, before the vizier reached the house.

Having ascertained the truth, the vizier hastened back to the Caliph and Zobeide.

"Commander of the Faithful," said the vizier, having entered the apartment and made his salutation, "it is Nouzhatoul-aouadat who is dead, for the loss of whom Abou Hassan is as much afflicted as when he appeared before your majesty." The Caliph, not giving him time to pursue his story, interrupted him, and addressing himself

to Zobeide : “ Well, madam,” said he, “ have you yet anything to say against so certain a truth ? Will you still believe that Nouzhatoul-aouadat is alive, and that Abou Hassan is dead ? And will you not own that you have lost your wager ? ”

“ How, sir ? ” replied Zobeide ; “ I am not blind or mad ! With these eyes I saw Nouzhatoul-aouadat in the greatest affliction. I spoke to her myself, and she told me that her husband was dead. My women also heard her cries and saw her affliction. Let me, I pray you, send my nurse, in whom I can place confidence, to Abou Hassan’s, to know whether or not I am in error.” The Caliph consented and the nurse set out on her inquiry.

In the meantime Abou Hassan, who watched at the window, perceived the nurse at a distance, and guessing that she was sent by Zobeide, called his wife, and told her that the Princess’s nurse was coming to know the truth. “ Therefore,” said he, “ make haste, and do to me as we have agreed on.” Accordingly, Nouzhatoul-aouadat covered him with the brocade Zobeide had given her, and put his turban upon his face. The nurse, eager to acquit herself of her commission, hobbled as fast as age would allow her, and entering the room perceived Nouzhatoul-aouadat in tears, her

hair dishevelled, and seated at the head of her husband, beating her breast, with all the expressions of violent grief.

As soon as the nurse was gone, Nouzhatoul-aouadat wiped her eyes, and released Abou Hassan. They both went and sat down on a sofa against the window, expecting what would be the end of this stratagem, and to be ready to act according as circumstances might require.

The nurse, in the meantime, made all the haste she could to Zobeide, and gave the Caliph and the princess a true account of what she saw, affirming that it was Abou Hassan who was dead. This perplexed the Caliph more and more ; and he said, " It seems to me a strange series of marvels, and that no one can be believed more than another. Therefore, I propose we go ourselves to examine the truth, for I see no other way to clear these doubts." So saying, the Caliph arose, and the princess and her train followed.

Abou Hassan, who saw them coming, apprised his wife of it. " What shall we do ? " cried she ; " we are ruined." " Not at all ; don't be afraid," returned Abou Hassan. " Let us do as we have agreed ; and all, you shall see, will turn out well. At the rate they are coming, we shall be ready before they reach the door."

In fact, Abou Hassan and his wife covered themselves as well as they could, and having placed themselves, one beside the other, in the middle of the chamber, each under the piece of brocade, they waited quietly for the arrival of the Caliph and Zobeide. On entering the chamber, followed by all their people, they were much surprised and perplexed at the dismal spectacle which presented itself to their view. Zobeide at last broke silence. "Alas!" said she to the Caliph, "it is too true my dear slave is dead, as indeed it will appear, for grief at having lost her husband." "Allow rather, madam," replied the Caliph, "that Nouzhatoul-aouadat died first, and that the poor Abou Hassan fell under the affliction of seeing his wife, your dear slave, die." "No," replied Zobeide, with a spirit excited by the contradiction of the Caliph, "Abou Hassan died first, because my nurse saw his wife alive, and lamenting her husband's death."

At last the Caliph, reflecting upon all that had passed, and vexed at not being able to come at the truth, tried to devise some expedient which should determine the wager in his own favour and against Zobeide. "I will give," cried he, "a thousand pieces to the person who shall ascertain which of the two died first."

The Caliph had scarcely spoken these words, when he heard a voice, under the brocade which covered Abou Hassan, say, "Commander of the Faithful, I died first; give me the thousand pieces of gold." And at the same time he saw Abou Hassan free himself from the brocade which covered him, and throw himself at his feet. His wife uncovered herself in the same manner, and ran to throw herself at the feet of Zobeide. Zobeide set up a loud cry of fright and alarm. At last recovering herself, she was overjoyed at seeing her dear slave again, almost at the moment she felt inconsolable at having seen her dead.

"So then, Abou Hassan," said the Caliph, laughing, "how came it into your head thus to surprise both Zobeide and me in a way we could not possibly be upon our guard against?"

"Commander of the Faithful," replied Abou Hassan, "I will tell you the whole truth. I and the wife you gave me have been too profuse in our entertainments to our friends, and we have expended all the treasures which your royal bounty supplied us with. This morning we found our chest quite empty; and knowing your highnesses' partiality to a pleasant joke, we invented this artifice to supply our need, which we humbly entreat you will have the goodness to forgive."

The Caliph and Zobeide were very well satisfied with the sincerity of Abou Hassan, and were disposed to forgive him the deception practised on them. "Follow me, both of you," said the Caliph ; "I will give you the thousand pieces of gold that I promised you, for the joy I feel that you are neither of you dead."

"Commander of the Faithful," resumed Zobeide, "content yourself, I beseech you, with causing the thousand pieces of gold to be given to Abou Hassan ; you owe them only to him. As to his wife, that is my business." At the same time she gave a thousand pieces of gold to Nouzhatoul-aouadat, in proof of the joy she felt that she was still alive.

Thus did Abou Hassan and Nouzhatoul-aouadat obtain the favour of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid and of Zobeide, and gained from their bounty enough to supply all their wants.



"THE SWEET MUSIC OF THE STRINGED INSTRUMENTS "

THE ENCHANTED HORSE

ONCE in the bygone ages, Persia was governed by a mighty and powerful King, Sabur by name, who was not only wealthy, but wise as well.

He had three handsome daughters ; but his son Prince Feroze-Shah was the pride and joy of his heart. Now it was a custom of that country

to celebrate two solemn festivals during the year ; that of Mihrgan (the Autumnal sun-fête, our Michaelmas), and Nau-roz or New Year, which fell on the first day of spring.

On these occasions, which were observed by religious ceremonies as well as rejoicings, King Sabur held public audience at his Court at Shiraz. There were great displays and many entertainments, and citizens or strangers who had any ingenious novelty to show would take this opportunity to bring them before the King's notice. The Monarch took great interest in such matters, and was renowned for the liberality with which he rewarded those whose inventions pleased him.

On one Nau-roz—never to be forgotten!—a Hindoo presented himself at the Palace and, upon the guards making way for him to enter, prostrated himself before the King, and, wishing him joy of the festival, displayed a most splendid model of a horse carved in ebony and ivory, richly caparisoned and ready harnessed. It stood there so naturally that one could take it to be alive. Quoth the King, “ ’tis a marvellous fine horse ; but what use hath it ? ” To which the Hindoo replied, “ O King of Kings, it is indeed a most marvellous horse, for it taketh its rider

wheresoever he desireth to go. It riseth in the air like a bird and goeth a greater distance in a day than can ordinarily be compassed in a year."

The King and all his courtiers wondered greatly, for never before had they heard of nor seen anything like it; and His Majesty requested the Hindoo to show them the strange feats whereof he boasted.

Immediately the Hindoo mounted and asked the King where he desired him to go.

"Seest thou yon mountain," said King Sabur, pointing to an eminence some three leagues distant, "Go thou there and return again with thy magic steed; and bring me a branch from a palm-tree that groweth at the base."

"To hear is to obey," responded the Hindoo, turning a peg on the right side of the horse's neck, and rising up in the air, like a streak of light, he was soon lost to sight. In a quarter of an hour he was back again bearing a branch from the palm that grew at the base of the mountain. The King, delighted with what he had witnessed, was now very desirous of possessing the horse and to this end enquired of its owner what price he demanded for his masterpiece.

"O auspicious King," said the Hindoo, "as thou seest, my horse is a wonder of wonders,

and of such great value that there is but one thing in all thy Kingdom, that I would take in exchange for it."

"Name but this thing thou desirest, it shall be thine," cried the Monarch.

Quoth the Hindoo, "An it find favour in thy sight, thy youngest daughter would I have in marriage ; she alone, of all thy great possessions, O King, do I hold of equal value to that treasure of treasures, the Ebony Horse." At this request the courtiers could not refrain from laughing aloud, for the Hindoo was nigh upon a hundred years old, and of exceeding ugliness ; and the Princess was beautiful as the moon, and graceful as the gazelle. Nevertheless the Monarch hesitated how to act, being swayed one way by affection for his daughter, the other by desire for the horse.

Prince Feroze-Shah, who observed his sire's dilemma, stepped forward and pleaded with him not to contemplate the sacrifice of both his dignity and his daughter to this insolent wizard, this impertinent fellow.

The Hindoo was greatly mortified at the Prince's words, and vowed, under his breath, to take vengeance on him ; but he said nothing and bided his time.

"Thou art right, O my Son," replied the

King, "I will by no means consider his proposal ; but ere some other offer be made to him, do thou test this horse thyself and see how it goeth."

The Prince, nothing loth, mounted, and placing his feet in the stirrups, requested the Hindoo to show him how to manage and guide the steed. The latter, seeing his opportunity to punish the young man, who had angered him, cried, "Turn the peg on the right side of the neck, so wilt thou ascend." The Prince did as he was bid, and the horse rose like a flash, with its rider, to soar up, higher and ever higher until both disappeared from view. The moments passed, and as Feroze-Shah did not come back his father became troubled and commanded the Hindoo to make the horse descend forthwith.

"O King of the Ages," said the old man, "that can I not do. Verily, I greatly fear that thou wilt see thy son nevermore. As thou sawest, 'twas no fault of mine that the Prince in his haste to be gone, asked not how to descend, and I, alack ! forgot to tell him."

When the King heard these words his grief and rage were terrible to witness, and he bade his slaves bastinado the Hindoo and cast him into prison, where he should remain until such time as Feroze-Shah returned home, safe and sound.

Throughout the land of Persia there was mourning and weeping for the Prince who came not back.

The Enchanted Horse had meanwhile been rising and rising as it progressed in its flight, and as it seemed to be drawing nearer to the sun, Feroze-Shah commenced to consider the advisability of descending to earth again. He turned the peg in a reverse direction ; but though it moved readily, he found himself going higher still, at a swifter pace.

“ Now am I foredoomed,” thought the Prince. “ None but Allah, the All-Merciful, can save me,” and he uttered an earnest prayer for help. Then, being a man of intelligence, it crossed his mind that if one peg made the horse ascend, another one might be there for the reverse purpose. He carefully examined the animal’s neck and was rewarded by finding a small peg on the left side, which upon being turned, caused the horse to slacken pace and commence to descend very slowly towards the earth.

The sun was setting as down they went, then the darkness of night came on, but still down, down flew the horse, until at length it alighted, like a weary bird, upon the terrace of a castle.

The Prince dismounted, tired and famished,

for he had had neither bite nor sup since early morning, and groped his way along the terrace, hoping to meet with someone who would provide him with food and shelter.

Near the end of the terrace he came upon a staircase ; so, leaving the horse, he tip-toed softly down, for he knew not whether friend or foe awaited him below. The staircase led to an apartment, and by the snores which resounded through the open door Feroze-Shah surmised that its occupants must be asleep. He entered and found himself within the guard-room of the women's quarters. Numbers of slaves lay fast asleep, their drawn sabres beside them, and the Prince passed by without disturbing them. Beyond a curtained doorway, he observed the glimmer of lights, and impelled by curiosity withdrew the hanging. For a moment he remained rooted to the threshold, for the sight that met his gaze aroused his wonder and admiration. In the middle of a splendidly furnished apartment stood a raised couch upon which slumbered the most beautiful damsel he had ever beheld. She was surrounded by slaves, all fast asleep, and seeing this Feroze-Shah ventured to approach the dais.

Falling upon his knees beside the couch, he looked and looked until, forgetting everything

else but the admiration the lady inspired in his heart, he leant forward and gently kissed her hair. She awakened immediately, and, seeing a stranger beside her couch, sat up in affright, demanding "Who art thou and how camest thou here?"

"O Lady," quoth he, "I beg thee pardon my intrusion, which was all unwitting; I entered thy chamber, the Prince of Persia; but I shall quit it nothing more than thy slave. Know that I have been brought from my father's Kingdom by means of magic and sorcery, and now do crave thy kindness and protection." Whereupon the lady replied, "O Prince, this is not the land of the barbarian, but the Palace of my father the Rajah of Bengal, and in his absence, I do bid thee welcome." She aroused her slaves and bade them conduct him to an apartment where he could rest after they had regaled him with a fine repast.

All that night the Princess of Bengal lay awake thinking of the handsome stranger whose gentle voice and courtly manners had quite won her heart. At daybreak she summoned her slaves, and bade them tire her in her most becoming garments and finest jewels, and was not satisfied until her mirror assured her that never before had she appeared more charming.

When her toilet was complete she sent word to Feroze-Shah that she was about to visit him ; and the Prince, delighted by the honour conferred upon him, awaited her coming with impatience.

As she entered the room he salaamed low and greeted her with deepest respect. When he had led her to a couch, the Princess requested him to relate his adventures to her, and inform her by what means he had gained access to the palace, which stood in a lonely part of the country.

Very willingly did he tell her the story of the Ebony Horse, and she listened to it with astonishment and interest. When he had told his tale he rose to take leave of her with many expressions of thanks and gratitude ; adding, “ No longer may I tarry here, for it behoveth me to return to mine own country and allay the anxiety of my parents and sisters.” “ Nay, O my Lord,” responded the Princess, “ remain awhile with me and learn the ways and customs of Bengal, so canst thou better relate what thou hast seen when thou hast returned to thine own land.” The Prince, feeling that he could not gainsay so polite a request, acquiesced the more willingly in that he was eager to stay with his beautiful hostess, whose charms had already won his heart. For two happy months the hours sped by, and

found the Prince still loitering with the lady from whom he scarce could tear himself away.

Each day brought some new pleasure, feasts, picnics, concerts or hunting parties in the fine woods that adjoined the palace. But best of all they loved to dally after a dainty repast, listening to the sweet music of the stringed instruments and singing maidens ; or to sit upon soft carpets in a shady nook conversing together of many pleasant things.

At last the Prince dared no longer delay his departure, but both of them admitting they could not live a day apart, Feroze-Shah begged the Princess to return with him to his father's Kingdom. " O Light of the Universe," he said, " my heart beats for thee alone, thy slave and lover am I."

The Princess after some demur consented to accompany her beloved one, and he promised to ease her mind, after their nuptials had been celebrated at his father's court, by sending an ambassador to her sire, the Rajah, then absent on a journey, with all due apologies and explanations. So the matter was arranged, and ere sunrise, whilst all in the Palace were lost in slumber, the twain ascended to the terrace, and mounting the Enchanted Horse directed its course to Persia. On they sped, until the domes and

minarets of Shiraz came into view, and they then descended to alight at the Summer Palace, which was situate some little distance from the city.

Leaving the horse at the door, Feroze-Shah begged the lady to rest within, whilst he returned to acquaint his father of his arrival, and beg him to receive her in the manner befitting her high rank. He would then return and they would enter the city together, with all pomp and ceremony. Taking his leave, he hastened to his father, who received him with joy and ecstasy, for he had long mourned his son as dead.

When Feroze-Shah had told his tale, King Sabur straightway set about arranging for the reception of the Princess of Bengal. He commanded the city to be decorated, and, taking horse, set out with his son and an escort of courtiers, soldiers, guards and citizens, to bring the lady home. A magnificent litter had been hastily prepared for the Princess, and Feroze-Shah was arrayed in his finest, so that he looked beautiful as the morning sun.

The King, being a man of his word, forgot not the Hindoo, and whilst the preparations were in progress, ordered him to be brought into the presence, and giving him his freedom, dismissed him with a munificent gift.



PRINCE TEROZE SHAH AND THE UNHANTED HORSE.

But the Hindoo felt sore in regard to the treatment that had been meted out to him, and sought for a way whereby to revenge himself on both the King and Feroze-Shah. By means of diligent enquiry he learnt all that had transpired during his imprisonment and saw for himself the preparations that were afoot to receive the Princess.

He hied away to the Summer Palace as fast as his old legs would carry him, and found to his satisfaction that he had outstripped the procession, which was even then on the way to welcome the Princess.

The Princess was easily persuaded by the Hindoo that he was a trusty messenger sent by the Prince to convey her to the great square before the Palace, where the Royal Family had assembled to do her honour. He respectfully requested her to mount the Ebony Horse, and then jumped up in front, at the same moment turning the peg of ascent; and away they went up into the air. They sped along and passed the King, Feroze-Shah, and all their cortège, but so high up as to be beyond their reach. Although they could hear the cries of the Princess, who by this time realized that she had been perfidiously stolen from her friends, they had no means of rescuing her.

The Prince was broken-hearted when he saw his beloved one carried away. He took a hurried farewell of his father and set out to search for his Lady, determining to find her, even though the Hindoo carried her to the ends of the earth.

Meanwhile the Enchanted Horse flew on and on, until it alighted in a meadow in a far country, the Land of the Greeks. This meadow was nigh to a city which was governed by a King of might and power; and it chanced that he had that very day sallied forth to the chase, and passed close by the spot where the Princess of Bengal was rending the air by cries for help.

The Monarch and his retainers hastened to see what was amiss, and found, to their amazement, a beautiful damsel struggling to escape from an ill-favoured Hindoo, who held her fast.

Quoth the King, "O my Lady, what ails thee, and who is this old man who holdeth thee?"

Before the Princess could reply, the Hindoo broke in, declaring, "O, my Lord, the woman is my wife, the daughter of my father's brother." But she cried aloud, "Save me from this man; no wife or kin of his am I, he hath stolen me treacherously and brought me hither on an enchanted horse." Her beauty and her tears persuaded the King of the truth of her story, so he

ordered the Hindoo to be seized and his head cut off, which his slaves did without further parley.

The Princess was conducted to the Palace and had a sumptuous lodging assigned to her there ; and the horse was placed in the Royal Treasury, for none knew the secret of its motion. The Princess related to the King the events that led to her arrival in his dominion, and fondly hoped he would send her back speedily either to Bengal or Persia, as it behoved a courteous prince to act. What was her dismay when he declared that he had no intention so to do, but designed to marry her that very day. She was so perturbed at this unexpected announcement that she fell into a deep swoon. When she regained consciousness she resolved to feign madness, so as to avoid this distasteful marriage, and in a fine frenzy tore her clothes to tatters and writhed upon the floor.

The Monarch was completely deceived, and finding he could by no means calm her, left her to the care of her slaves. As the malady appeared to increase, the King summoned his Court physicians and bade them attend her.

They endeavoured to approach her to feel her pulse, but her fury was so well dissembled that

they feared to go near her, and satisfied themselves by ordering some innocuous drug. One by one all the celebrated physicians of the Kingdom were called in, always with the same result, until the King was reduced to despair, for he greatly desired to marry the Princess.

All this time Feroze-Shah wandered from country to country in quest of the Princess, until after a weary while he came to the Land of the Greeks. Here there was much talk about the sick lady, for the King had sent out a proclamation that he would richly reward whosoever could cure her.

As Feroze-Shah rested at a Khan, a party of merchants commenced to chat about the matter, and at his request related how the lady had been rescued by the King from an evil-looking Hindoo. They also made mention of a wooden horse, belonging to the same Hindoo, which was a very miracle of naturalness, and was now to be seen in the Royal Treasure-house. The Prince rejoiced to hear these tidings, having no doubt that at last he had found his liege lady.

He forthwith disguised himself in the garb of a doctor and repaired to the Capital, where he sought audience of the King, professing to be an adept in the cure of madness. The King at once

led him to a window through which he could watch the patient, being himself concealed.

Having assured himself that it was the Princess, he begged the King to permit him to enter the apartment alone, so that he might commence the treatment without delay. Receiving the required permission, he entered stealthily and bending over her, as she sat singing a pathetic love-song, whispered softly in her ear, "O delight of my eyes, 'tis I thy faithful Feroze-Shah."

The Princess was transported with delight when she recognized the Prince, and they greeted one another fondly, albeit with discretion for fear of prying eyes. They took hasty counsel together and agreed that in order to facilitate her escape the Princess should show that her malady was abated, and meanwhile Feroze-Shah would endeavour to arrange some means whereby this could be effected.

The next day the King paid a visit to the poor mad lady, and his delight knew no bounds when he found her calm and gracious, bearing no trace of her indisposition.

He sent for Feroze-Shah to express his gratitude and offered him a rich reward; but the Prince refused to accept either the one or the

other, saying, "O King, though by good fortune I have discovered the cause of the disease, the cure is by no means complete. As her brain hath been turned by enchantment, whereof the horse of Ebony is the agent, so can she not be wholly restored until the beast is exorcised." "O illustrious Physician," replied the King, "lieth it within thy power to do this thing?"

"Yea," said the Prince, "an thou wilt permit the lady and the horse to be conveyed to the spot where thou sawest them first, and let thy slaves place braziers of lighted charcoal around them. Then will I burn a certain incense, the secret properties of which are known to me; and thou, thy courtiers and subjects may see the most astonishing sight ever beheld. But I warn thee, O auspicious King, let none approach the magic circle within the braziers; remain all of ye on the farthest confines of the meadow." The King readily acceded to so reasonable a request, and looked eagerly forward to the time when the Princess would be sufficiently restored for the wedding festivities to commence. The Ebony Horse was brought to the meadow, and the King rode thither, with all his nobles and troops, quite unsuspecting of the Prince's purpose.

When they came to the appointed place, the

Princess and the horse were set some distance from the King and his company, and surrounded by braziers of burning charcoal.

Quoth the counterfeit physician, "Now will I proceed to exorcise the devil that investeth this horse. It behoveth me to mount the horse and take the lady behind me. Then shalt thou witness a marvel, O King, for the beast will rise into the air and fare towards thee ; and when thou hast lifted the lady from the horse, thou wilt find her madness gone from her for ever."

The Prince entered within the circle of braziers and paced around with footsteps solemn and slow, eyes downcast and hands crossed upon his breast. Presently he mounted the horse and assisted the Princess to a seat behind him, whereupon he turned the peg of ascent, and upwards soared the horse. Whilst still within earshot of the multitude, Feroze-Shah shouted, "O King, in future seek not to wed princesses before thou hast gained their consent ;" and away they went up into the empyrean blue. Thus was the Princess delivered by her own true love and carried back to Persia by the Enchanted Horse.

When the King of Greece perceived that he had been tricked, he was seized with such a fit of fury that it well-nigh cost him his life. His

ministers soothed him and calmed his ire, saying, "Truly thou art well rid of the crazy damsel and the physician who was naught but a wicked sorcerer." The Enchanted Horse stayed not until it alighted in the Square before the Palace of Shiraz. The King, hearing the acclamations of the populace, rushed to the spot and rejoiced greatly to behold his son and the Princess of Bengal. After tenderly embracing them both, he led them to the Queen, who gave them a loving welcome. As soon as the consent and approval of the Rajah of Bengal had been obtained, the nuptials of Feroze-Shah and his lady were celebrated with a magnificence that has never been surpassed, before or since, in all the land of Persia. The citizens feasted and made merry for a whole month, and peace and goodwill reigned in all the Land.



"WE HAVE BEEN BETRAYED"

ALI BABA AND THE FORTY THIEVES

IN days of yore two brothers dwelt in a certain town of Persia. Cassim, the elder, had a rich wife and became a prosperous merchant ; but Ali Baba married a woman as poor as himself, and earned a scant livelihood by vending wood that he collected in the forest.

One day, whilst occupied in cutting wood and loading it on his three asses, Ali Baba was surprised to see a body of horsemen riding in his

direction. Fearing that they might be robbers, he hastily concealed his asses in a thicket, and climbed up a tree which grew upon a high rock. As he lay hidden amongst the branches he was able to observe the approaching riders without himself being seen.

There were forty of them, strong active men, each burdened with what Ali Baba took to be booty seized in a plundering expedition. As they came beneath the tree whereon he perched, each man dismounted, tethered and unloaded his horse and took off the saddle bags, which were full of gold and silver. They stood behind their Captain, who cried, "Open Sesame" (Sesame is a small grain), and as he uttered these words a door opened widely in the rock-face, and the thieves, for they were such in very deed, entered one after another, each bearing a burden. When the last man was in, the door closed of itself, leaving no trace of its whereabouts on the rock-face.

The thieves remained some time in the cave to which they had carried their treasure, and meanwhile Ali Baba dared not descend for fear of being caught and killed.

At length they came out, and the Captain cried, "Shut Sesame," when the door immediately closed. Mounting their horses they soon dis-

appeared from view, and Ali Baba climbed cautiously down from his hiding-place.

He was filled with curiosity by what he had just seen, and determined to try what fortune those strange words, "Open Sesame," would bring him ; so he made his way to the spot where the Captain had stood, and uttered the formula aloud. The door flew open, revealing a large cave lighted by means of a cleft in the top of the rock, and filled with bales of merchandise, camel-loads of silks, brocades and carpets, in addition to bags upon bags of gold and silver.

Ali Baba hastily collected several sacks of gold coins, and loading them on his asses covered them over with fuel ; this done, he cried, "Shut Sesame," whereat the portal swung to, and he set out for home.

He drove his beasts into his own little yard, and making the gate fast, uncovered the sacks of gold coins and carried them in to his wife.

When she beheld all this money, the good woman feared that her husband had taken to thieving and berated him soundly ; but she was pacified when Ali Baba had related his adventure, and began thereupon to count the gold piece by piece.

Her spouse watched her awhile, then he cried,

“O foolish woman, how much time wilt thou waste counting the coin; rather let us hasten to bury it so that none can guess our secret.”

Quoth his wife, “Thou speakest wisdom; do thou dig a hole in the garden, and I meanwhile will hie me to thy brother’s house to borrow his scales, wherewith we can weigh the money and learn somewhat of its value.” “Do as thou wilt,” replied Ali Baba, “but keep close guard upon thy tongue.” Having given her promise to observe his counsel, she hurried round to Cassim’s house and begged her sister-in-law to lend her the scales. “Abide here a moment whilst I search for them,” replied Cassim’s wife, who was greatly puzzled as to the other’s need for a pair of scales, considering that she was too poor to have enough of anything to weigh. Cassim’s wife was a wily woman, and she soon hit upon a plan whereby she might be enabled to learn what was afoot. Procuring the scales, she proceeded to smear the bottom of the measure with wax and suet, reckoning that by some lucky chance a particle of that which was to be weighed might adhere thereto and permit her to gratify her curiosity.

The wife of Ali Baba took the scales home, suspecting nothing, and set about measuring the coins, and afterwards aiding her husband to

stow them away and cover them over with earth.

This done she returned the scales to her kinswoman, and, in her excitement and haste, failed to note that a coin had stuck to the bottom of the measure. No sooner was her back turned than Cassim's wife eagerly examined the measure and found the piece of gold. "So ho! she has gold coins to weigh," cried the astonished woman, and she wondered and wondered whence the money came, seeing that Ali Baba had always been so poor, and could hardly wait until her husband arrived at home that evening to tell him the news.

"What thinkest thou?" said she; "thy brother hath so much gold he must needs weigh it, instead of counting it as we do," and all that night they could not sleep a wink for discussing this strange affair.

Cassim's heart was full of envy and jealousy as he rose next morning, and he went betimes to Ali Baba's house crying, "O my brother, long hast thou thrown dust in mine eyes, with thy pretence of poverty and indigence, yet hast thou such store of gold thou must needs weigh it with scales."

"I know not of what thou pratest," said Ali

Baba ; but he feared that in some way his secret had been betrayed. "Thou canst not deceive me," replied Cassim, wrathfully displaying the gold coin which was of ancient date. "Thou knowest thou hast thousands like this one which my wife found sticking to the measure."

Ali Baba perceived that it would be better to acquaint his brother with the whole matter, as, by withholding the truth, he would expose himself to suspicion and unpleasantness.

Cassim heard him to the end and then exclaimed : "Now shall I go to the spot thou hast described, and say the words that caused the door to open, and if thou hast in any particular deceived me, beware of my wrath." Cassim set out without delay in search of the cave, driving ten mules before him, each one bearing an empty chest upon its back.

When he came to the rock and tree described by his brother, he pronounced the words, "Open Sesame," and the door opened at once and closed behind him when he was inside the cave. Never had he spent such a happy time ; he walked about gloating upon the riches he saw around him, and planning how to secure the lot for himself. He selected as many sacks of gold as his mules could carry, and went to the door with the view of

loading them up, but his mind was so filled with plots and schemes, he could not recollect the magic words that would open the door. He cried, "Open, O Barley," but the portal remained closed ; next he tried in turn all manner of names, but the one word that eluded his memory was the one required to open the door. As he paced up and down in desperation, he heard the clatter of hooves, and knew his last moments had come. The robbers, returning to their cave, were surprised to see the mules grazing outside, and suspecting that all was not well, they at once drew their sabres and hastened to the door, which opened when the Captain uttered the usual words.

Cassim made a daring dash for liberty, but ran full tilt against the Captain, and was immediately attacked and split in twain by the sabre of one of the robbers.

The thieves soon put their place in order ; but did not miss the sacks purloined by Ali Baba. They were greatly exercised in their minds as to how Cassim had gained admittance to the cave and discovered their secret ; but finding no solution to the mystery had perforce to content themselves. They quartered Cassim's body and nailed the parts on either side within the door, as a warning to any other intruder who dared to enter

the cave ; and then left the forest to pursue their nefarious occupation of killing and plunder.

Cassim's wife grew uneasy as the hours passed and he returned not, so she went to Ali Baba saying, " Cassim hath not come home, thou knowest whither he went, thinkest thou some ill-chance hath befallen him ? "

Ali Baba consoled her with hopes that he would come home when the cloak of night had fallen on the city. But when the hours of darkness were well-nigh spent, and still he did not return, the woman repented right bitterly of her curiosity and jealousy, which she feared had led to a disaster.

Ali Baba set out with his asses at daybreak in search of Cassim, and when he perceived the blood-stains in front of the cave, he apprehended that some grave trouble had happened to his brother. He hastily entered the cave, and was horrified to find the gruesome remains nailed to the door. In fear and trembling, he removed the quarters, and wrapping them in a piece of cloth, placed them on an ass, concealing the package with fuel and sticks. He made his way back to the city with the greatest caution, and knocked softly at the door of Cassim's house. Morgiana, a slave-girl, answered his summons, and Ali Baba,

aware of her discretion and intelligence, sought her aid to conceal the truth about her master's misfortune from all the neighbours.

Leaving her to prepare the body for burial, he sought his sister-in-law and broke the sad news of Cassim's death. When the widow's first grief had somewhat subsided, Morgiana was called in to discuss ways and means of allaying all suspicions, and she undertook to solve this difficult matter to the best of her ability.

No sooner had Ali Baba departed, than Morgiana hied her to the druggist's shop and asked for a medicine for her master, who lay at death's door.

That evening she again visited the druggist's and purchased some more medicine, sobbing the while and crying, "Alack! I fear I shall lose my good master." Presently the sound of wailing arose from Cassim's house, and Ali Baba and his wife hastened thither, weeping and crying aloud, that their brother was no more.

Ere dawn the next day, Morgiana veiled her face and fared forth to the stall of Baba Mustapha, an old cobbler, and also a maker of shrouds, whose shop was always opened earlier than any other.

She put a gold piece in his hand, saying, "O cobbler, I have work for thee to do, and gold to

pay thee with; bind a handkerchief over thine eyes and come with me." At first the cobbler demurred; but the sight of a second gold piece decided him, and he permitted the slave-girl to blindfold him and lead him to Cassim's house. There he was ushered into a darkened room and bidden to stitch together the quarters of the corpse, and afterwards to make a shroud wherewith to cover it. After his task was done, he received the promised reward, and Morgiana again blindfolded him and led him back to his shop, enjoining the strictest secrecy, lest woe befall him.

Cassim's funeral obsequies were now duly carried out, and neighbours and ministers of the mosque accompanied the body to the grave; whilst the quarter where he had dwelt re-echoed with the lamentations of the women-folk, as was customary on such occasions. So was he buried, and none surmised the true manner of his demise.

At the desire of the widow, Ali Baba and his wife made their home with her, and the sacks of gold were brought thither secretly at dead of night. Cassim's son now carried on his father's business, and relied greatly on Ali Baba's advice and affectionate interest, which never failed him.

Meanwhile the forty thieves had returned to

the cave, and were amazed to find that Cassim's remains had disappeared in a most mysterious fashion.

Quoth the Captain, "O my men, there is no doubt we have been betrayed, and it concerneth us to discover who knoweth the secret of our cave, which hath been so well guarded since the days of our forefathers. Let us seek him out, and do him to death, lest our treasures be filched from us."

One of the band offered to go to the city disguised as a merchant and, by gossiping here and there, endeavour to find out whether any townsman had recently died under mysterious circumstances, and, if so, to locate his house and associates. "An I succeed not in my quest," said he, "my life shall be forfeit."

Day dawned as he reached the city, and finding the shops still closed, he wandered about the market-place until chance directed his footsteps to Baba Mustapha's stall, where the cobbler sat on his stool busily plying needle and thread. The robber watched him awhile, and then said, "I marvel thou canst see to sew; 'tis scarce daylight yet, and thou art old."

"Ay;" replied the other, "there is naught amiss with my sight; but yesterday, I sewed together a dead body in a room almost dark."

The thief pricked up his ears. "A dead body," said he; "nay, thou jestest, wherefore should'st thou sew a corpse?" "Ask me no questions," answered the cobbler, "'tis no affair of thine."

"I desire not to pry into thy secrets; but if thou would'st earn a piece of gold, lead me to the house where that dead man was," said the thief. Baba Mustapha shook his head, and rejoined, "That I cannot do, for a woman led me thither, and after we had gone a short distance she bound the eyes of me, and brought me back in the same manner."

"Perchance thou could'st lead me in that direction, if we go to the same spot and I too bind thine eyes; 'twere well worth another gold piece to thee, an thou canst find the site," persisted the thief. They walked along and presently Baba Mustapha cried, "Here is the place where mine eyes were bandaged." The kerchief was tied over the cobbler's eyes, and his wits, sharpened by his lust for gold, directed his footsteps towards the quarter whither Morgiana had led him. As he walked he counted his footsteps until he came before Cassim's house, where he stopped crying, "So many steps did I take yesterday, this must be the place." The bandit marked the door with a

piece of chalk, and relieving the cobbler of his bandage, asked him whether he could tell him whose house this was.

“ I know not,” said he, “ this street is unfamiliar to me ;” and the thief, realizing that there was nothing more to be gained from the cobbler, paid him his due and himself hastened back to the trysting-place in the forest.

Shortly after Morgiana fared forth on an errand, and the chalk marks on the door attracted her attention.

“ Now who hath done this ? ” said she, “ maybe some enemy of my master, who would know the house by this sign.” She pondered awhile, and then procuring a piece of chalk marked all the doors of the neighbours’ houses in the same way ; and being discreet kept the matter to herself.

The thief meanwhile was boasting to his comrades of his sagacity in so quickly finding the clue ; and soon he and the Captain were on their way to the marked house.

When they reached the street, the bandit pointed out the house with the chalk mark on the door ; but the Captain espied another and yet another, all distinguished in the same manner. The boaster was covered with confusion, for he could not recognize his own mark, and he returned

to the forest to suffer death for having failed in his undertaking.

A second robber, undeterred by his comrade's fate, now volunteered to pursue the inquiry, so off he went to Baba Mustapha's stall, and bribed him with a gold piece to lead him to the place where he had taken the first thief.

" 'Tis a lucky day," muttered the cobbler, and the pair soon found their way to the house where Ali Baba now dwelt. The bandit had supplied himself with some red chalk with which he marked the door in an inconspicuous place and gaily hied him to join his comrades.

" O Captain," said he, " this time there is no mistake," and he begged his chief to return with him at once. But the thief had not reckoned for Morgiana's sharp eyes, which soon detected the marks on the door, and it was the work of a moment for her to rub the red chalk on the neighbours' doors as well.

The Captain was again disappointed, as his guide could in no way distinguish the house, and the latter returned to the forest to the doom that awaited him. The Captain fearing to lose more of his men decided to investigate matters himself, and accordingly sought out Baba Mustapha, who gladly undertook a task that had already brought

him such a golden harvest. The Captain regarded the house carefully, until a picture of it was impressed upon his mind so that he would again recognize it. He then rejoined his men, and ordered them to procure nineteen mules and thirty-eight large leather jars, one full of oil, the others empty. When everything was ready, the Captain, disguised as a trader, drove the mules into the city at dusk one evening. Now each mule was laden with two of the leathern jars; but they were no longer empty, for each, save the one that was full of oil, contained a robber fully armed. The outsides of the jars had been smeared with oil, and the tops firmly closed down, except for a small rent that served as a breathing space.

It chanced that Ali Baba was taking a stroll in front of his door, when the Captain came along with his mules. Seeing that he belonged to the house, the bandit approached him, and petitioned for a night's lodging in his courtyard. "I have travelled far, and being overtaken by darkness, know not where to find a resting-place at this late hour, so grant me permission to stay with thee," he pleaded.

Ali Baba, who did not recognize the Captain in his disguise, gave him kindly welcome, and per-

mitted him to lead his mules into an empty shed. He bade Morgiana place a savoury meal before the stranger, and prepare a bed in the guest chamber, and full of kindly intent, sent a boy slave to fetch grain and water for the mules. The Captain tended his beasts, and let down the jars, before entering the house, where he was well received by his host. As Ali Baba wished him good night, he called to Morgiana in the robber's hearing, to see that his guest lacked nothing for his comfort; then he added, "and do thou also see, O Morgiana, that the slave-boy, Abdullah, hath a clean suit of white clothes ready for me to-morrow early, as I would go to the Hammam (Baths). Moreover, make me a bowl of broth overnight, that I may drink it on my return."

When Ali Baba had retired, the Captain went privily to the shed and took the lid off each jar, whispering as he did so, "When ye hear my voice, come out without delay, and await my orders." With this he retired to the chamber that had been assigned him, and lay upon the bed to rest awhile, ere summoning his men to do the cruel deed he contemplated.

Morgiana, meanwhile, was busy in the kitchen preparing the broth, when suddenly her lamps went out, and she found that all her oil was spent.

“Now, what’s to do?” said she, standing perplexed, until Abdullah suggested that she could fetch a little oil out of the trader’s jars. “’Tis well advised,” cried she, and taking her oil can, went across the yard, to the shed where the jars stood in rows. As she came to the first one she was amazed to hear a voice within whispering, “Is it time for us to come out, O Captain?”

Being quick of wit, the maid hesitated not, but replied in a voice that she made to resemble the trader’s. “The hour is not yet come,” and she passed on from one jar to the other, always with the same result. At last she came to the jar of oil, from which she filled her can.

“Heaven protect us,” she murmured, as she returned to the kitchen, “my master hath harboured eight and thirty thieves, and these await the command of their captain to come forth to plunder and kill us.”

Morgiana replenished and lighted her lamp, and fetched enough oil to fill a great cauldron which she set upon the fire. When the oil was boiling hot, she baled it out in potfuls, and bearing them to the shed poured enough in every jar to destroy the robber within.

It was done so expeditiously and silently that no one in the house was aroused, not even

Abdullah, who dozed in the hall. When she was satisfied that all the men were dead, she went back to the kitchen and, shutting the door, brewed Ali Baba's broth, keeping a wary eye on the shed meanwhile.

Ere long the Captain awoke, and opening his window gave a signal to his men to come forth ; but hearing no reply he went quietly to the shed purposing to arouse them from their slumbers.

When he discovered the fate that had overtaken his band, so fearful was he for his own safety that he lost no time in climbing the wall. He escaped through the garden, recking not of the sharp eyes that watched him from the kitchen window.

Ali Baba rose before dawn and went to the Hammam, and on his return, being surprised to see the oil jars still in the shed, he enquired of Morgiana why the trader had not taken his wares to market.

Thereupon the girl related the adventures of the night, whereof the household was still in ignorance, and also confessed to what she had done in regard to the chalk marks.

Ali Baba could scarce find words wherewith to thank her, when he realized what the brave girl had done for him. He conferred her freedom upon

her, and asked what other boon he could grant. She replied, "O master, let us lose no time in talk, for the dead must be buried forthwith, so that none discover our secret." So Ali Baba dug a great trench in the garden, laid the bodies therein, and concealed the weapons and jars. Abdullah gradually disposed of the mules in the market, and so every trace of the robbers disappeared.

The Captain betook himself to the forest full of rage and bitterness, and finding the loneliness unbearable, he determined to avenge the loss of his lusty men by slaying Ali Baba, and furthermore decided to set about the matter without delay.

Next day he disguised himself in the garb of a merchant, and went to the city, hoping to hear that Ali Baba had been seized and imprisoned for the wholesale murders that had been committed on his premises.

In this he was disappointed, so he made up his mind to punish Ali Baba when he could do so without danger to himself. In order to watch for this opportunity he hired a shop in the Bazaar, and stocked it with goods from the cave, which he brought in secretly under cover of night.

It so chanced that his shop faced the warehouse of Ali Baba's nephew, son of the defunct

Cassim ; and he, being a handsome, civil young fellow, soon attracted the notice of Cogia Hassan, as the robber now called himself, and a friendship sprang up between them. For some time the Captain could obtain no tidings of Ali Baba ; but on a day of days the latter happened to pay a visit to his nephew, and the watchful eyes opposite at once recognized him.

When the Captain learnt that Ali Baba was the young man's uncle, his friendship increased by leaps and bounds. He presented the youth with gifts, and frequently asked him to sit at meat with him, feeding him with the choicest of dishes.

Desiring to make a return for this hospitality, the young man consulted his uncle about the matter, as his house was too small to adequately entertain so distinguished a guest. Ali Baba at once suggested that his nephew should invite his friend to take a walk on the morrow, which was Friday, the day when all the important merchants closed their shops. He could then, as it were by chance, bring him to Ali Baba's home and invite him in, and a fine collation would be ready prepared.

The youth was pleased with the plan, and the next day, by some pretext brought his friend to Ali Baba's door. Although the robber desired

nothing more than to gain admission to Ali Baba's house, he yet hesitated to do so in the guise of an invited guest. He endeavoured to excuse himself; but the young man was persistent, and fearing to raise suspicion, the Captain had perforce to enter, smiling as one who felt greatly honoured.

Ali Baba was delighted to welcome his nephew's friend, and insisted upon him sitting at table with them.

"O my Lord," said Cogia Hassan, "indeed I fain would stay, but I dare not sit at meat with thee, for by order of my physician, I may not eat aught that hath been prepared with salt."

"An if that be all," cried Ali Baba, "I can at once give instructions to that effect, for the viands are not yet cooked, so stay thou must."

Ali Baba went to the kitchen, and bade Morgiana avoid the use of salt in any of the dishes, whereupon she asked, "Who is this man that eateth meat without salt?" "What matters that to thee?" responded her master; "do thou but hasten with the meal."

Morgiana busied herself with the cooking, but her mind was occupied with speculations about this stranger who would eat no salt, and she determined to have a look at him. To this end

she offered to assist Abdullah to spread the feast : and no sooner did she see Cogia Hassan than she knew him to be the robber Captain. As she regarded him attentively, she observed a dagger concealed beneath his robe, and divined the reason of his refusal to partake of salt in the house of an enemy.

By the time the meal was served, Morgiana had conceived a plan whereby she could ensure the safety of her master and his nephew for whom she had a great liking. She hastily changed her dress, and donning fine garments such as dancers wear, veiled her face, and stuck a sharp dagger in her belt. When these preparations were complete she called to Abdullah, "Go fetch thy tambourine that we may play and dance to amuse our master's guests."

Just as supper was finished and the Captain was cogitating how best he could fall upon Ali Baba and dispatch him, and, if occasion arose, his nephew also, Abdullah and Morgiana entered the room playing and dancing. As Abdullah struck his tambourine the girl danced with such grace and skill that the onlookers were vastly pleased. She performed various steps, and then drawing her poniard, swayed from side to side in a dance of surpassing beauty. Finally she took

the tambourine from Abdullah in her left hand, and still holding the dagger in her right, went round for largess as was the custom with such dancers.

Ali Baba and his nephew each threw a gold piece into the extended tambourine, and Cogi Hassan drew out his purse, but ere he could extract a coin therefrom, Morgiana, with a movement quick as lightning, plunged her poniard into his breast.

The robber fell back dead, and Ali Baba cried in wrath and dismay, "O Morgiana, what hast thou done, wherefore bringest thou ruin upon us all?" Morgiana snatched the dagger from under the dead man's robe and displayed it, saying, "Indeed, my master, I have saved thee from deadly peril; this villain who would not eat thy salt was the Captain of the robber band."

Ali Baba wept as he thanked the maid for again saving his life, and said, "Thou deservest the best I can give thee, and if thou be willing, O Son of my Brother, take the girl for thy wife, and cherish her as thy preserver and mine."

The youth was delighted to do his uncle's bidding, for he had long looked with favour on the faithful slave, whom he deemed worthy of the highest respect and honour. The Captain

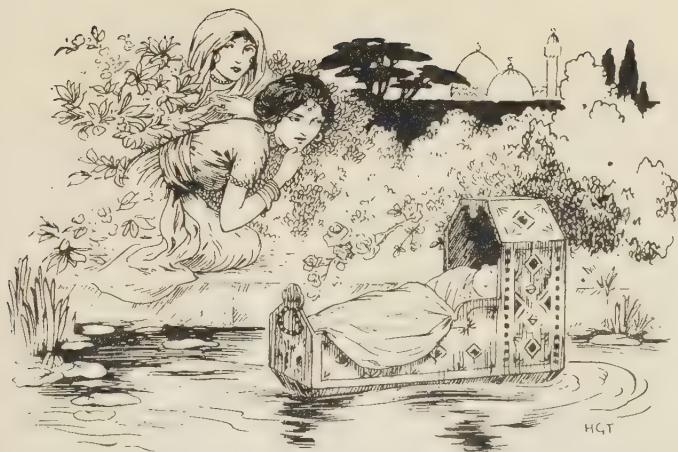
was hastily interred with his comrades, and none knew of the matter, until their bones were discovered long after Ali Baba and all his kin were dead and gone. The marriage of Cassim's son with Morgiana was soon arranged, and the ceremony performed with great pomp and magnificence. A sumptuous feast gave satisfaction to all the friends and neighbours, who joined in the merry-making with right good will.

It was some time before Ali Baba ventured into the robbers' cave ; but at last he plucked up courage to do so, and found everything unchanged since his last visit.

Feeling assured that all the bandits must be dead, he regarded himself as their heir, and from time to time carried away as much gold as he required.

When he grew old, he confided his secret to his nephew, who handed it down to his posterity, so that for many generations the family lived prosperously.

Ali Baba himself rose to a position of worth and dignity in the town, where he had formerly been a pauper, and he did all that he could to deserve the blessings that the secret treasure brought him.



“THEY PLACED THE BABE IN A CRADLE AND FLOATED IT DOWN
THE STREAM”

THE THREE SISTERS

As Koonooshaw, the Sultan of Persia, wandered at night through the streets of his Capital, he chanced to overhear the conversation of three sisters. They were seated on a divan near the door, and the eldest one said, “I wish I were the wife of the Sultan’s baker and could eat my fill of fine white bread!”

Replied the second, “A foolish desire; I would rather marry the cook and taste of all the dishes prepared for His Highness.”

“Ah!” sighed the youngest, who was beautiful

as the dawn, "I would wed the Sultan himself and be the mother of a splendid prince."

Resolving to gratify the wishes of the sisters, the Sultan espoused the youngest, and the elder ones were respectively wedded to the baker and the cook.

After a time the elder sisters became furiously jealous of the youngest, who was greatly loved and honoured both by the Monarch and all the people. They plotted together to bring about her downfall, and soon found an opportunity to carry out their evil designs. The Queen, who loved her sisters, one day charged them to carry her infant son to his sire, the Sultan. Instead of obeying her behest they placed the babe in a cradle and floated it down the stream which flowed near the palace. The child would have been drowned, had he not been observed and rescued by the Intendant of the Gardens, a wealthy official at the Sultan's Court.

During the following two years another prince and a princess were born, and on each occasion their wicked aunts secretly floated them down stream, and then hied to the Sultan with an insulting message from the Queen.

The Sultan, wroth at the supposed insolence, condemned his consort to imprisonment, which

undeserved punishment was borne by the victim with great patience and humility.

Meanwhile the three children had been rescued by the Intendant, who took them home and brought them up as though they were his own. He built a magnificent country house to which he retired with his beloved charges, and died there after many years, without having revealed to his adopted children that they were foundlings. The princes, who were called Bahman and Perviz, were fond of hunting, and one day, whilst thus occupied, their sister Periezadeh entertained a holy woman who happened to pass that way.

The old dame was loud in her praises of the beautiful mansion, with its tasteful gardens and orchards.

“Thy house only lacketh three things to make it perfect,” said she.

“And what may these be?” inquired Periezadeh, who was very proud of her home.

“O my Lady!” replied the holy woman, “hast thou not heard of the Speaking-Bird, the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water?”

“Prithee tell me of them,” said Periezadeh.

“The Speaking-Bird hath notes so melodious that they attract all the birds in the neighbourhood to join in the song; and the leaves of the

Singing-Tree give forth, unceasingly, the sweetest of harmony. Thou shouldst plant the Tree near the Golden-Water, a single drop of which will suffice to make a fountain ever rising and falling, but never overflowing its basin."

Having given this information, the dame prepared to depart; but Periezadeh begged her to say where these wonders could be found.

"Whosoever goeth in quest of them," responded the holy woman, "must travel eastwards along the road before this house. The first man he encountereth, on the twentieth day of his journey, will direct him further."

When the brothers returned, Periezadeh related to them what the holy woman had told her, and they observed how eager she was to possess the three marvels.

"O sister mine," cried Bahman, "right gladly will I seek those treasures for thee."

Undeterred by Periezadeh's tearful entreaties to remain at home in safety, he set out the next day at dawn with a stout heart and well armed against the perils of the road.

"Farewell," said he, "and fear not, an if thou wilt observe this knife I leave with thee, thou canst know how it fares with me. So long as all is well the blade will retain its brightness,

but should blood appear upon its surface, thou wilt know that I am dead."

He travelled eastwards until the twentieth day, when he sighted a dervise sitting beneath a great tree.

Greeting the old man, who was covered from head to foot by his long matted hair and beard, he begged to be directed to the Speaking-Bird, the Singing-Tree and the Golden-Water.

Said the dervise, "O youth, I am loath to direct thee, for the path thou wouldst travel is full of peril; many young braves have gone that way, but none return."

Bahman, however, was persistent in his entreaties, so the dervise handed him a bowl, saying, "Mount and follow this until it stoppeth at the foot of a mountain, when thou must leave thy horse and climb the path that is strewn with great black boulders.

Thou wilt hear the clamour of threatening voices, but heed them not nor look behind thee, lest thou be transformed into a boulder, as have all the others who traversed this path. The treasures thou seekest are at the summit, and the descent is easy."

Bahman thanked the dervise and galloped after the bowl which rolled along until it was

stopped by the base of the mountain. As he ascended the steep path an ear-piercing din, a hubbub and medley of voices broke forth around him. He heeded them not, until the sounds waxed loud as thunder and he grew confused. A voice close behind him suddenly uttered a cruel taunt, and forgetting the counsel of the dervise, Bahman turned round to punish his tormenter. In a moment he was turned into a great boulder encumbering the mountain path.

Meanwhile Periezadeh looked constantly at the knife and rejoiced to find it bright and spotless, but on the twentieth day the surface became dull and drops of blood commenced to fall from the blade.

The princess was inconsolable, reproaching herself bitterly for whatever mishaps had befallen her beloved brother.

Perviz mingled his tears with hers, and determined to set out without delay to learn his brother's fate, intending, at the same time, to seek for the three treasures that Periezadeh so ardently desired to possess.

Ere he departed on his journey, Perviz presented a string of one hundred pearls to his sister, saying,

“An thou wouldst know how it fareth with

me, count these beads. So long as I live they will run smoothly on the string; but if they become fixed, thou wilt know that I am dead."

Perviz was a right valorous youth, but failed in his quest, as so many others had done before, and he too became a boulder on the mountain side.

Periezadeh sat sadly at home counting her pearls and praying for the safety of her brother. On the twentieth day the pearls stuck fast and she knew that Perviz was no more. Losing no time in useless lamentation, she disguised herself in her brothers' garments and set out to find her beloved ones, or share their fate.

She found the dervise and questioned him, as her brothers had done, and from him received the same warnings. When she reached the foot of the mountain, Periezadeh drew out some cotton-wool from her wallet and plugged her ears. At first not a sound of the voices penetrated; but as she ascended the rude words reached her in spite of her protection.

"What care I for taunts and insults," she cried, and the ruder the voices became, the less she heeded them.

The path was perilous, but at length she

gained the summit. The noises were now louder than thunder, but Periezadeh pressed on and seized the cage wherein the Speaking-Bird perched.

At once the noises ceased and only the melodious notes of the bird broke the silence.

“O my liege lady, I am thy slave,” quoth the bird, “and great service will I do thee, for thou art brave as thou art fair.”

With the aid of the bird, Periezadeh was soon possessed of a branch of the Singing-Tree and a flagon of the Golden-Water.

She now entreated the bird to aid her in rescuing her brothers, whose fate she had learned from the dervise.

“Sprinkle the stones with the Golden-Water,” said her adviser, and as she did so, each boulder became a living man greatly rejoicing in his deliverance.

Bearing her treasures and escorted by her brothers, Periezadeh returned home joyfully.

As soon as the Speaking-Bird commenced to warble in the garden, thousands of feathered songsters collected about its cage and joined in the lay. The branch of the Singing-Tree grew rapidly and its leaves produced the most entrancing harmonies, whilst, close by, the fountain

of Golden-Water rose and fell, but never overflowed its basin.

The fame of these wonders was soon bruited abroad and at length reached the ears of Koonooshaw, who decided to see them for himself.

When her brothers informed Periezadeh of the honour that was to be paid them, she hastened to consult her faithful counsellor, the Speaking-Bird, as to what dishes were meet to set before a king.

"Amongst other dainties," said the bird, "thou must not fail to provide a dish of cucumbers stuffed with pearls."

"O Bird, never have I heard of such a dish, and moreover I have not pearls enough to stuff even a small cucumber," cried Periezadeh.

"Dig betimes, on the morrow, beneath the first tree in the avenue and thou wilt find pearls enough and to spare," replied her informant.

When the morrow dawned, Periezadeh bade the gardener dig beneath the first tree in the avenue, and presently he unearthed a golden casket filled with large round pearls. Periezadeh bore them to the cook, and when the Sultan arrived the dish of cucumbers was already prepared.

Koonooshaw was charmed and delighted, not

only with the three marvels he beheld, but also with Periezadeh and her handsome, manly brothers.

“ I would I had such children to cheer my old age,” he cried ; “ yea, rather would I possess them than the marvels I have beheld.”

When the repast was served the Monarch sat beside the casement where hung the cage of the Speaking-Bird, so that he might enjoy the music of its notes.

The dish of cucumbers was set before him and he took one upon his plate. Upon cutting it open he was greatly amazed to find it filled with pearls, and exclaimed aloud, “ Of a verity this is a strange dish. Wherefore is it set before me, for I cannot eat the gems ? ”

Thereupon the Speaking-Bird replied, “ O King of Kings, is it less strange to see cucumbers stuffed with pearls than to believe that a good and faithful wife would mock and insult the spouse she loveth ? ”

Quoth the Monarch, “ Thou speakest wisely, O Bird, but how can I do other than believe the words of my two sisters-in-law ? ”

Then the bird answered, “ Know, O King, that thy wife’s sisters, in all envy and malice, lied to thee and also cast away thy three children,

and for this thy Queen hath languished, these many years, in captivity."

"Alack!" groaned the Monarch, "how can I undo the evil that hath been done?"

"By claiming thine own," said the bird, "for thy heirs do stand before thee: thy noble children who were found and adopted by the Intendant of the Gardens."

When the Sultan was convinced of the truth of these statements, he embraced his children rapturously, and lost no time in liberating their mother from her prison. The good Queen was restored to her position of love and trust, and peace and joy reigned in the Palace.

For many days the populace held high festival, but the two envious sisters could take no part in the merriment, because their heads had been cut off by the sharp sword of the Sultan's executioner.

THE HISTORY OF CAMARALZAMAN, PRINCE OF THE ISLE OF THE CHILDREN OF KHALEDAN, AND OF BADOURA, PRINCESS OF CHINA

THERE was once an island called the Isle of the Children of Khaledan. It was governed by a king named Schah-zaman, who esteemed himself the most fortunate of men. One thing only disturbed his happiness, which was, that he was advanced in years and had no children. One day he had complained bitterly of this misfortune to his grand vizier, and asked him if he knew any remedy for it.

That wise minister replied, “If what your majesty requires of me had depended on the ordinary rules of human wisdom, you had soon had an answer to your satisfaction ; but my experience and knowledge fall far short of your question. It is to God alone we can apply in cases of this kind. In the midst of our prosperities, which often tempt us to forget Him, He is pleased

to mortify us in some instance, that we may address our thoughts to Him, acknowledge His omnipotence, and ask of Him what we ought to expect from Him alone. Your majesty has subjects," proceeded he, "who make a profession of honouring and serving God, and suffering great hardships for His sake ; to them I would advise you to have recourse, and engage them by alms to join their prayers with yours, for the boon you crave."

Schah-zaman approved this advice, and thanked his vizier. He immediately caused alms to be given to every community of these holy men in his dominions ; and having sent for the superiors, declared to them his intention, and desired them to acquaint their devout men with it.

The King obtained of Heaven what he requested, for shortly after he had a son. To express his gratitude to Heaven, he sent fresh alms to the communities of dervishes, and the Prince's birthday was celebrated throughout his dominions. The Prince was brought to him as soon as born, and he found him so beautiful that he gave him the name of Camaralzaman, or "Moon of the Age."

He was brought up with all imaginable care ;

and as he grew up he learned all that was required of him, and acquitted himself with such grace and wonderful address, as to charm all that saw him, and particularly the Sultan his father.

When he had attained the age of fifteen, the Sultan, who tenderly loved him, proposed to resign his throne to him. "I fear," said he to his grand vizier, "lest my son should lose in the inactivity of youth those advantages which nature and my education have given him: therefore, since I am advanced in age, I propose to resign the government to him."

"Sire," replied the grand vizier, "the Prince is yet but young, and it would not, in my humble opinion, be wise to burden him with the weight of a crown so soon. Do not you think it would be proper to marry him first? Your Majesty might then admit him to your council, where he would learn by degrees the art of reigning; and so be prepared to receive your authority, whenever you shall think fit to resign your high office."

Schah-zaman approved the advice of his prime minister, and summoned the Prince to appear before him.

The Prince, who had been accustomed to see his father only at certain times, was a little startled at this summons; when, therefore, he came into

his presence, he saluted him with great respect, and stood with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The Sultan, perceiving his constraint, addressed him with great mildness. "I sent for you, my son, to inform you that it is my intention to provide a proper marriage for you; what do you think of my design?"

The Prince, on hearing this, became greatly agitated, and, with much respect and many apologies, begged the Sultan to excuse him for declining to marry on account of his youth.

Schah-zaman felt very sorry at the Prince's refusal to accede to his request. He entertained, however, no feelings of anger, but admitted him to his council, and continued to heap on him his royal favours. At the end of another year he again pressed upon him the same question, and urged upon a compliance with his request. The Prince answered with much more readiness than on the first occasion. "Sire, I find myself more and more confirmed in my resolution not to marry. The mischief which women have caused in the world, and which are on record in our histories, and the accounts I daily hear to their disadvantage, are the motives which powerfully influence me; so that it will be in vain to solicit me upon this subject." As soon as he had thus spoken, he

quitted the Sultan abruptly, without waiting his answer.

Any monarch but Schah-zaman would have been angry at such freedom in a son, and would have made him repent ; but he loved him, and preferred gentle methods before he proceeded to compulsion. He communicated this new cause of discontent to his prime minister. " Tell me, I beseech you, how I shall reclaim a disposition so rebellious to my will."

" Sire," answered the grand vizier, " patience cures all. May it please you to give the Prince another year to consider your proposal. If in this interval he return to his duty, you will have the greater satisfaction, and if he still continue averse when this is expired, your majesty may in full council observe that it is highly necessary for the good of the state that he should marry ; and it is not likely he will refuse to comply before so grave an assembly, which you honour with your presence."

The Sultan, who so anxiously desired to see his son married, thought this long delay an age ; however, though with much difficulty, he yielded to his grand vizier.

The Sultan went next to the apartment of the mother of the Prince, and told her, with much



THE KING, PRINCESS BADOURA, AND CAMARALZAMAN

concern, how his son had a second time refused to comply with his wishes. "I know," he said, "that the Prince has more confidence in you than he has in me, and will be more likely to attend to your advice. I therefore desire you would take an opportunity to talk to him seriously, and urge upon him, that if he persists in his obstinacy, he will oblige me to have recourse to measures which would give him cause to repent having disobeyed me."

From that time Fatima (this was the name of the Prince's mother) had frequent conversations with her son the Prince; and she omitted no opportunity nor argument to endeavour to induce in him a compliance with his father's wish; but he eluded all her reasonings by such arguments as she could not well answer, and continued unaltered.

The year expired, and to the great regret of the Sultan, Prince Camaralzaman gave not the least proof of having changed his sentiments. One day, therefore, when there was a great council held, the prime vizier, the other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army being present, the Sultan thus addressed the Prince:—"My son, it is now a long while since I expressed to you my earnest desire

to see you married ; I have thought fit to propose the same thing once more to you in the presence of my council. It is not merely to oblige a parent that you ought to have acceded to my wish ; the well-being of my dominions requires your compliance, and this assembly joins with me in expecting it. Declare yourself, then, that your answer may regulate my proceedings.”

The Prince answered with so little reserve, or rather with so much warmth, that the Sultan exclaimed, “ How, unnatural son ! have you the insolence to talk thus to your father and Sultan ? ” He ordered the guards to take him away, and carry him to an old tower that had been long unoccupied, where he was shut up, with only a bed, a little furniture, some books, and one slave to attend him.

Camaralzaman, thus deprived of liberty, was nevertheless pleased that he had the freedom to converse with his books, which made him regard his confinement with indifference. In the evening he bathed and said his prayers ; and after having read some chapters in the Koran, with the same tranquillity of mind as if he had been in the Sultan’s palace, he undressed himself and went to bed, leaving his lamp burning by him while he slept.

In this tower was a well, which served in the

daytime for a retreat to a certain fairy, named Maimoune, daughter of Damriat, king or head of a legion of genies. It was about midnight when Maimoune sprang lightly to the mouth of the well, to wander about the world after her wonted custom. She was surprised to see a light in the Prince's chamber. She entered, and without stopping at the slave who lay at the door, approached the bed.

She could not forbear admiring the Prince, and kissed him gently on both cheeks and in the middle of the forehead without waking him, and took her flight into the air. As she was ascending, she heard a great flapping of wings, and knew it was a genie whose name was Danhasch who made the noise, one of those genii who resisted the power of the great Solomon, while she acknowledged his rule and authority.

"Tell me, wandering spirit," said Maimoune, "whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what thou hast done this night." "Fair spirit," answered Danhasch, "you meet me in a good time to hear something very wonderful. The country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest in the world. Giaour, the present King, has an only daughter, the most beautiful creature ever was seen. Neither you nor I could

find sufficient eloquence to convey the most distant idea of her loveliness. Her hair is golden, and reaches below her feet ; her forehead is as smooth as the finest polished mirror ; her eyes are brilliant as lighted coals ; her nose is perfect ; her mouth small ; her cheeks vermilion ; her teeth surpass the finest pearls in whiteness ; her voice agreeable ; the most beautiful alabaster is not whiter than her neck. In short, there is not a more perfect beauty in the world.

“ The fame of this Princess’s incomparable beauty has induced many powerful kings to demand her in marriage. But as the King her father has determined that his daughter shall not marry except with her own consent, all the ambassadors returned without success.

“ At last one king, most wealthy and powerful, sent a solemn embassy to demand the hand of the Princess. The King pressed his acceptance upon his daughter. The Princess entreated him to dispense with her compliance, and on his commanding her to obey, she forgot the respect due to the King her father, and angrily replied, ‘ Sire, speak to me no more of this, nor of any other marriage ; if you persist in your importunities, I will plunge a poniard into my heart, and thus free myself from them.’

“The King of China, extremely irritated against the Princess, replied, ‘My daughter, you are beside yourself, and as such I must treat you.’ In fact, he had her confined to an apartment in one of his palaces, and allowed her only ten old women to attend on her, the chief of whom was her nurse. Then he sent ambassadors to the neighbouring Kings to inform them of his daughter’s refusal to marry—and to make known in every court that if any physician would cure her distraction, he should obtain her in marriage as his reward. I entreat you, powerful Maimoune, to come and see this wonderful fair one. I am ready to conduct you to her.”

Instead of replying to Danhasch, Maimoune burst into a loud fit of laughter, which continued for some time, and which very much astonished Danhasch, who did not know to what cause to attribute it. Having at last, however, composed herself, she said, “You would quickly change your opinion if you had seen the beautiful Prince I have this moment left. He is indeed worth looking at, for never was such a gracious creature born.” “May I inquire,” replied Danhasch, “who this Prince can be whom you speak of?” “Know,” said the fairy, “that nearly the same thing has happened to him as to the Princess thou hast been

talking of. The King his father would marry him against his will. For this reason he is at this moment imprisoned in an ancient tower where I take up my abode, and where I have had an opportunity of seeing him."

"I will not contradict you," resumed Danhasch, "but you will give me leave, until I have seen your Prince, to think that no mortal, either man or woman, can equal the beauty of my Princess. The only means of deciding which surpasses the other in beauty, is to accept the proposal I have made you to come and see my Princess, and afterwards to show me your Prince." "There is no occasion for me to take so much trouble," said Maimoune; "there is another method by which we can both be satisfied. You know my abode in the ancient tower—there the Prince is confined. Go bring thy Princess and place her by the side of my Prince on his bed. We can then easily compare them with each other, and thus settle our dispute."

Danhasch at once flew to China, and returned with inconceivable swiftness, bearing the beautiful Princess on her couch fast asleep. Maimoune received her, and introduced her into the chamber of Prince Camaralzaman, where they placed her on the bed by his side.

When the Prince and Princess were thus laid close to each other, a grand contest arose between the genie and the fairy as to which was the handsomer. They stood for some time admiring and comparing them in silence. Danhasch was the first to speak, "Now are you convinced," said he to Maimoune, "that my Princess is more beautiful than your Prince?"

"How?" cried Maimoune. "Thou must be blind not to see that my Prince is infinitely superior to thy Princess. She is beautiful, I confess; but compare them well one with the other, and then thou wilt see that it is as I say."

"Were I to compare them for any length of time," replied Danhasch, "I should think no otherwise than I do. This, however, will not prevent me from giving up my judgment to yours, charming Maimoune, if you wish it." "It shall not be so," interrupted the fairy; "I will never suffer a rebellious genie such as thou art to show me a favour. I will call an umpire: and if thou dost not consent, I win the cause by your refusal."

Danhasch had no sooner consented, than the fairy struck the ground with her foot. The earth opened, and there instantly appeared a most hideous dwarf, lame, blind of one eye, having six

horns on his head, and his hands and feet hooked. As soon as the ground had closed again, he perceived Maimoune, and kneeling on one knee, he asked what she desired of him, as he was ready to obey her commands.

“ Rise, Caschcasch,” said she, “ and cast your eye on that bed, and tell us truly which is the more beautiful, this Prince, or this Princess.”

Caschcasch having examined them very attentively for a long time, without being able to make up his mind, “ Mistress,” said he to Maimoune, “ I confess that I cannot tell which is handsomer than the other. The more I examine them, the more each seems to me to have a like perfection of beauty. I propose that you submit them each to this test—that you wake them each in turn, and the one that expresses the strongest affection for the other shall be considered to be the less beautiful.”

The proposal of Caschcasch was approved of. Maimoune then changed herself into a flea, and jumped upon the neck of Camaralzaman. She gave him so sharp a bite that he awoke, and put his hand to the place ; but he caught nothing, for Maimoune, prepared for this, had jumped away, and taking her original form—invisible, however, like the other two genii, to all but themselves

—stood by in order to witness what would happen.

In drawing back his hand, the Prince let it fall upon that of the Princess of China. He opened his eyes, and expressed great surprise at seeing so beautiful a woman by his side. He lifted up his head, and supported it on his elbow, the better to observe her. The great beauty of the Princess excited sensations in his breast to which he had hitherto been a stranger, and he could not help exclaiming, “What beauty! what charms!” and saying this, he kissed her forehead, her cheeks, and her lips so fondly, that he must have broken her slumbers, except for the enchantment of Danhasch.

“There cannot be a doubt,” he exclaimed, “but that this is the lady to whom the Sultan my father wished to marry me. He has been much to blame not to let me see her sooner; I should not then have offended him by my disobedience. Who knows if he may not have brought her here himself, and may even now be concealed, in order to see how I conduct myself, and make me ashamed of my former decision.”

The Princess of China had a very beautiful ring on her finger, and as the Prince concluded this speech, he drew it off quietly, and put on one

of his own in its place. And it was not long before, through the enchantment of the genie, he fell into as deep a sleep again.

Now Danhasch, in his turn, transformed himself into a flea, and bit the Princess directly under her lip. She awoke suddenly, and, starting up, opened her eyes. How great was her astonishment when she saw the young Prince.

“What !” she exclaimed, “are you the Prince whom the King my father has destined for my husband ? Would that I had known this before ! I should then never have been imprisoned for a refusal to comply with his request.”

Having said this, the Princess shook Prince Camaralzaman in so violent a manner, that he must have awoke if Maimoune had not heightened his sleep by means of enchantment. She then took hold of his hand, and tenderly kissing it, perceived her own ring to be on his finger, and that she herself had on a different one. Having tried in vain to wake the Prince, she lay down, and in a short time fell asleep.

When Maimoune perceived that she might speak without any danger of waking the Princess of China, she said to Danhasch, “Art thou now convinced that thy Princess is less beautiful than my Prince ? But do you and Caschcasch take

the Princess, and carry her to her own bed." Danhasch and Caschcasch executed these orders, while Maimoune retired to her well.

When Prince Camaralzaman awoke the next morning, he looked on each side of him to see if the lady whom he had seen in the night was still there; but when he perceived she was gone, he said to himself, "It is so: the King my father wished to surprise me; I am, however, happy that I was aware of it." He then called the slave, who was still asleep, and desired him to make haste and dress him.

After he had thus finished his usual occupations, "Tell me truly," said he to the slave, "who brought the lady who slept in my chamber last night."

"Prince," replied the slave, in the greatest astonishment, "I swear to you that I know nothing about the matter. How could any lady possibly get in, as I slept at the door?" "Thou art a rascal," replied the Prince, "and art in league with some one to vex and distress me." Saying this, he gave him a blow, and then tied the rope of the well round his body, and let him down several times into the water. "I will drown thee," cried he, "if thou dost not tell me who the lady is, and who brought her."

“ Prince,” said the slave, trembling, “ I cannot tell you in the state I am now in ; allow me to change my dress.” “ I will,” replied the Prince, “ but take care on thy return thou tellest all the truth.”

The slave went out, and after having fastened the door on the Prince, ran to the palace, wet as he was. The King was engaged in conversation with his grand vizier, and was complaining of the restless night he had passed, in consequence of the disobedience of the Prince his son.

The minister endeavoured to console him, and convince him that the Prince had justly merited the punishment he endured.

The grand vizier had scarcely spoken, when the slave presented himself before King Schah-zaman, and related everything that Prince Camaralzaman had said, and the excesses he had been guilty of, and expressed his fears that he had lost his reason through his imprisonment.

The King, on hearing these sad tidings, exclaimed to the grand vizier, “ This is indeed a new and unexpected affliction. Go, lose not a moment, and examine yourself this affair, and come and tell me what you discover.” The grand vizier immediately obeyed. When he entered the chamber of the Prince, he found him seated with

a book in his hand, which he was reading with apparent composure. He saluted him ; and then the Prince addressed him, " O vizier, as you are here, I am glad to have an opportunity of asking you, who must know something about the matter, where the lady is who was with me in this chamber last night."

" Prince," said the grand vizier, " do not be surprised at the astonishment you see me in at this question. How can it be possible that any lady could have penetrated into this place in the night, to which there is no other entrance but by the door, at which a guard was set? I entreat you to collect your thoughts, and I am persuaded you will find it is only a dream, that has left a strong impression on your mind."

" I shall pay no attention to your arguments," resumed the Prince, in a more elevated tone of voice: " I will absolutely know what is become of this lady. I saw her. She played the part allotted her vastly well. You know it all, I dare say ; she has not failed giving you an account of the whole transaction." " Prince," resumed the grand vizier, " I swear to you, that all you have been relating was unknown to me, and that neither the King your father nor I sent you the lady you mention ; we should never have had such an

idea. Allow me once more to say, that this lady could only appear to you in a dream."

Upon this, he took the grand vizier by his beard, and said, "Go, tell my father that I will marry the lady whom he sent me last night." The grand vizier made a profound reverence on quitting him. He presented himself before Schah-zaman with an air of sorrow, and said, "Sire, what the slave related to your majesty is too true." He then related all that had passed.

Upon this, the King went himself to the tower with the grand vizier. Prince Camaralzaman received his father with the greatest respect. The King sat down, and asked him many questions, to which he replied with perfect good sense. At length he said, "My son, I beg you tell me who this lady is who slept last night in your chamber." "Sire," replied Camaralzaman, "I entreat you to bestow her on me in marriage. I am ready to receive her from your hands, with the deepest sense of my obligation to you."

"You speak to me in a way, my son," said he, "that astonishes me beyond measure. I swear to you that I know nothing of the lady you name, nor of her visit."

"Sire," resumed the Prince, "after the solemn assurance you have given me, I request you to

hear me, and then judge if what I shall have the honour of relating to you can be a dream."

Prince Camaralzaman then told the King his father all that had passed in the night ; and as he concluded he took the ring from his finger and presented it to the King.

"After what I have now heard, my son," replied King Schah-zaman, "I can no longer doubt that you did see the lady last night in your chamber. But where am I to seek her ? Come, my son, let us weep together ; you for loving without hope, I for seeing your affliction without the means of relieving it."

Schah-zaman took the Prince out of his prison, and conducted him to the palace, where the Prince fell quite ill from his despair, and the King shut himself up to weep with his afflicted son.

While these things were passing in the capital of King Schah-zaman, the two genii, Danhasch and Caschcasch, had reconducted the Princess of China to the palace where the King her father had confined her, and placed her in her bed.

The next morning, when she awoke and perceived that Prince Camaralzaman was no longer near her, she called her women in a voice which made them all run quickly to her. Her nurse approached her pillow, and asked her what

she desired. "Tell me," replied the Princess, "what is become of the young man who slept in my chamber last night, and whom I love so tenderly." "You do this to joke us, my Princess," replied the nurse; "will you please to rise now?" "I speak seriously," said the Princess, "and I will know where he is." "But, my dear Princess," rejoined the nurse, "you were alone when we put you to bed last night, and no one has entered this place that we know of."

The Princess of China seized her nurse's head, and slapped her. "Thou shalt tell me truly," cried she, "or I will murder thee." The nurse, getting out of her hands, instantly ran to the Queen of China, the mother of the Princess. "Madam," said she, "the Princess is out of her senses. You may judge of it yourself, if you will take the trouble of coming to see her."

The Queen of China immediately went to the Princess. "Indeed, my daughter," said she, "a Princess of your rank ought never to forget herself, or yield to anger. You well know, my dear child, that you are alone in your chamber, and that no man can possibly enter it."

The Princess forgot the respect she owed to her mother, and answered, "Madam, the King my father and you have for some time urged me to

marry ; the wish to do so has at length taken possession of my breast, and I will absolutely either marry the young Prince who slept in my chamber last night, or I shall die for love of him.” On her saying this, the Queen left her to acquaint the King of this new source of grief. The King of China immediately repaired to the Princess. “What is this I hear ? ” exclaimed he. “Has any young Prince slept in your chamber last night ? ” “That you may not entertain any doubts of my having seen this youth in my chamber last night, look if you please at this ring.” She held out her hand, and the King of China knew not what to think when he perceived that it was the ring of a man. But as he had confined her originally because she was supposed to have lost her wits, he supposed that the same calamity had befallen her again. He therefore had her committed again to the tower, and sent ambassadors to intimate his misfortune at the courts of the neighbouring Kings, and to give them notice that if any one could effect her cure, he should have her hand in marriage, and be made heir to the kingdom ; but if he attempts the cure and does not succeed after his admission to the presence of so beautiful a Princess, he must lose his head.

Several of the emirs and astrologers of the

court of the King of China and of the neighbouring potentates, animated by the double desire to be the husband of so fair a lady and the heir of so splendid a kingdom, tried in vain to effect the cure of the Princess, and paid with their heads the penalty of their ambition and their rashness.

Now, it so happened that the nurse of the Princess had a son, named Marzavan. He had been brought up as the foster-brother, and had been nourished by one and the same breast as the Princess of China. They had in their childhood treated each other as brother and sister. Marzavan became a great traveller, and visited many countries. He had also devoted himself to the study of judicial astrology, and other occult sciences. About a year after the Princess commenced her captivity, he returned to his own home ; and on learning from the Princess's nurse, his mother, the wonderful incidents of her illness, and her mysterious tale of the young man who left his ring on her finger, he expressed an earnest desire to be admitted to the presence of the Princess, as he thought he might, by his knowledge of magic, explain the marvel of which she had been the subject, and help towards her recovery. He did not wish to run the risk of losing his life, and so he entreated the nurse, his mother, to admit

him to a secret interview with his foster-sister. After many consultations with her son, she determined to secure him the favour he desired ; and one night, having obtained the favourable ear of the guard at the Princess's door, she disguised her son in the dress of a female slave, and thus obtained for him a passage through the palace to the Princess's chamber. Before the nurse presented her son to the Princess, she went to her, and said, "Madam, this is not a woman whom you see—it is my son Marzavan, who is just arrived from his travels, and whom I have found means to introduce into your chamber, disguised by this dress. I hope you will allow him to pay his respects to you."

At the name of Marzavan, the Princess expressed great joy. "Come forward, brother," cried she to Marzavan, "and take off that veil. It is not forbidden to a brother and sister to see each other uncovered." Marzavan saluted her with great respect ; but without allowing him time to say anything, she exclaimed, "Surely, brother, you at least are not of the number of those who think me to be mad."

The Princess then related to Marzavan all her history, and showed him the ring which had been exchanged for hers. "I have disguised nothing

from you," continued she. "In what I have told you, I acknowledge that there is something mysterious, which I cannot comprehend, and this leads them all to suppose that I am not in my right senses; but they pay no attention to the other circumstances, which are exactly as I have related."

When the Princess had related her history, Marzavan made a most respectful obeisance, and expressed his determination to go and visit the cities and countries of the world he had not yet seen, and to try and discover at some of their courts the Prince whose ring was on the finger of the Princess, that he might thereby promote her happiness and recovery. He set out on the following day.

Marzavan travelled from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island. At the expiration of four months he arrived at Torf, a populous maritime town, where he no longer heard of the Princess Badoura, but every one was talking of Prince Camaralzaman, whose history he found to be nearly similar to that of the Princess of China. Marzavan, with much joy, inquired in what part of the world this Prince resided, and he was told the place. There were two ways to it, the longer by land, and the shorter

by sea. Marzavan chose the latter, and embarked in a merchant vessel, which had a good voyage till within sight of the capital of the kingdom of Schah-zaman. But as the vessel was entering the harbour, it struck on a rock, went to pieces, and sank in sight of the castle in which Prince Camaralzaman passed his life, and where his father, King Schah-zaman, was at that moment conversing with his grand vizier.

Marzavan threw himself into the sea, and swam to the castle of King Schah-zaman, where he was well received, and every assistance given him, according to the orders of the grand vizier.

On the next day, after his recovery from his fatigues, he was admitted to the presence of the grand vizier, who soon led the conversation to the afflicted son of his royal master, and related to Marzavan all the wonderful history of Prince Camaralzaman.

Marzavan felt convinced that this young prince was the person who had exchanged rings with the fair Princess of China, and he informed the vizier that he thought he could promise his recovery. He was admitted to the presence of the Prince, who was lying on his couch, with his father in much sorrow weeping beside him. Scarcely had Marzavan entered the room than he exclaimed,

“What a likeness! What a wonderful likeness!” He spoke of the likeness which he saw at once between the Prince Camaralzaman and the Princess Badoura. These words excited the curiosity of the Prince, which was still more increased by some improvised verses which Marzavan repeated, in which he made some mysterious allusions indicating that he knew all his secret history. The King, perceiving an unwonted look of interest come across the pale countenance of his son, took Marzavan by the hand, and said, “God grant that you may restore me my son;” and then, with the grand vizier, left the chamber.

No sooner was Marzavan left alone with the Prince than he approached his couch, and said, in a low and confidential tone, “Prince, the lady whom you love is well known to me. She is a Princess, Badoura, daughter of Giaour, King of China. She loves you no less than you do her. You are as necessary to her restoration as she is to your own recovery. Try, therefore, and perfect your health, that you may the sooner regain strength to visit her. I will be your companion.”

This discourse of Marzavan instantly produced a wonderful effect. Prince Camaralzaman was

so comforted by this new hope, that he got up, and entreated the King his father to permit him to dress himself. His countenance was full of joy.

The King embraced Marzavan, but did not inquire into the means by which so surprising a change was instantaneously effected. He ordered public rejoicings for several days, distributed presents to his officers and the populace, gave alms to the poor, and had all prisoners set at liberty. In short, nothing but joy and mirth reigned in the capital, which very soon spread its influence throughout the dominions of King Schah-zaman.

Prince Camaralzaman, having in a few days recovered his strength, pressed Marzavan to hasten his plans ; and to prevent the King Schah-zaman interfering with their intended departure, they determined to ask leave to form a hunting party, and under that excuse to flee secretly to the court of the King of China. The next day, Prince Camaralzaman told the King his father how much he wished to take an airing, and begged him to allow him to hunt for a day or two with Marzavan. " I do not object to it," replied the King, " provided, however, that you promise me not to remain out longer than one night. Too much

exercise at first might injure you, and a longer absence would be painful to me." The King then gave orders for the best horses to be chosen for him, and took care himself that nothing should be wanting for his expedition. When everything was ready, he embraced him, and having earnestly recommended him to the care of Marzavan, he let him depart.

Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan reached an open country ; and to deceive the two grooms that led the relay of horses, they pretended to hunt, and got as distant from the city as possible. At night they stopped at a khan, where they supped, and slept till about midnight. Marzavan, who was the first to wake, called Prince Camaralzaman, without waking the grooms. He begged him to give him his dress, and to put on another, which one of the grooms had brought for him. They mounted the horses of relay, and each leading one of the grooms' horses by the bridle, to hinder their following, set out at a quick pace.

The Prince and Marzavan, well supplied with valuable jewels to defray their expenses, continued their travels till they arrived at the capital of China. Marzavan made the Prince alight at a public khan for the reception of travellers. They remained there three days, to recover from the

fatigue of the journey. When the three days were expired, they went together to the bath, where Marzavan made the Prince put on the astrologer's dress he had provided, and afterwards conducted him within sight of the palace of the King of China.

The Prince, instructed by Marzavan in what he was to do, and furnished with every implement necessary for his assumed dress and character, approached the gate of the palace ; and stopping before it, cried out with a loud voice, in the hearing of the guard and porters, " I am an astrologer, and I come to complete the cure of the illustrious Princess Badoura, daughter of the great and puissant monarch Giaour, King of China, according to the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her, if I succeed, or to lose my life, if I fail."

Now, it had been a long time since either physician, astrologer, or magician had presented himself, after so many tragical examples of people who had failed in their enterprise. This address, therefore, soon drew a vast crowd of people around Prince Camaralzaman. On observing his elegant figure, noble air, and extreme youth, every one felt compassion for him. " What are you thinking of, sir ? " said those who were nearest to him ;

“ what can be your motive for thus exposing to certain death a life which has only just commenced ? Pray abandon this useless and fatal design.”

The Prince remained firm to his purpose ; and calling out a third time the same words, the grand vizier came himself, and conducted him into the presence of the King. The Prince no sooner perceived the monarch seated on his throne, than he prostrated himself, and kissed the earth before him. Of all the competitors for the honour of his daughter’s hand, the King had not seen one he liked so well, and he felt great compassion for Camaralzaman. “ Young man, I can scarcely believe that at your youthful age you can have acquired sufficient experience to cure my daughter. I wish you to succeed ; I would bestow her on you in marriage with the greatest joy. But if you fail, neither your youth nor your noble air can save your life.”

“ Sire,” replied Prince Camaralzaman, “ I thank you. What would be said of me if I were now to abandon the cure of so beautiful a Princess ? I entreat you to let me prove the infallibility of the art in which I am a proficient.”

The King of China ordered the Prince to be conducted to the chamber of the Princess. In his

anxiety to meet with the long wished-for object of his affections, he so hastened his steps as to elicit from the officer of the palace expressions of surprise at his eagerness to meet a cruel and certain death. "Friend," said the Prince, "the astrologers before me had not the confidence in their art that I entertain. I am certain of effecting the cure I have undertaken ; but to convince you of my skill, and of my knowledge of the disease, which is half the cure, I will cure the Princess without seeing her." On saying this, the Prince drew out his tablets, and wrote these words :—

" Prince Camaralzaman to the Princess of China.

" ADORABLE PRINCESS !

" A heart-stricken Prince would remind you of the fatal night when he gave you his heart during your sweet sleep. He even had the presumption to place his ring upon your finger, as a token of his love, and to take yours in exchange, which he sends you, enclosed in this note. If you will condescend to return it him as a reciprocal pledge of yours, he will esteem himself the happiest of men. But should you not comply, your refusal will make him submit to the stroke of death with so much the more resignation, as he will receive it for the love he bears you. He awaits your answer in your antechamber."

The officer of the King's palace went into the Princess's chamber and presented the packet. The fair daughter of the King opened it with the utmost indifference ; but as soon as she saw the ring, she ran to the door and opened it, and ran into the arms of the Prince, and both of them could scarcely speak for joy at their happy reunion. The nurse, who had run out with the Princess, brought them into the chamber, where the Princess returned her ring to the Prince.

" Take it," said she ; " I keep yours, which I am resolved not to part with to the end of my life."

The officer of the palace, meanwhile, returned to the King. " Sire," said he, " all the physicians and astrologers who have hitherto undertaken the recovery of the Princess, made use either of magic or of conjurations, or of perfumes or other things ; he has cured her without even seeing her." The King, most agreeably surprised, went immediately to the apartment of the Princess, whom he tenderly embraced ; he embraced the Prince also, took hold of his hand, and joining it to that of the Princess, " Happy stranger," cried he, " whoever you may be, I keep my promise, and give you my daughter in marriage. But it is not possible to persuade me that you are what you appear to be." " I am,"

said Camaralzaman, "a Prince by birth, the son of a King and Queen ; my father is called Schah-zaman, and reigns over the well-known Islands of Khaledan." He then related his adventures, and the miraculous origin of his love for the Princess ; that their affection for each other was conceived simultaneously, as was fully proved by the exchange of the two rings.

"So extraordinary a history," cried the King, "deserves to be handed down to posterity. I will have it written ; I will make it public to the neighbouring nations."

The ceremony of the nuptials was performed on that very day ; and the most solemn festivities and rejoicings took place throughout the extensive dominions of China. Marzavan was not forgotten : the King granted him free access to the court and bestowed on him an office of honour and importance.



"THE INCOMING TIDE LEFT ME STRANDED ON THE BEACH!"

CODADAD AND HIS BROTHERS

IN the city of Harran there was once a Sultan, who was not only rich, but virtuous and just.

He had fifty sons, whom, he fondly hoped, would one day succeed him as joint heirs to the throne ; and he took great delight in all of them, save one, called Codadad (God's Gift).

When Codadad was still an infant, his mother, the Princess Firuzah, inadvertently displeased the Sultan and was banished from the country.

She took her baby with her and sought refuge at the court of Samir, King of Samaria, where she lived happily for many years.

Samir loved little Codadad, who grew strong and handsome and valiant, and had him educated in a manner befitting a Prince of such high lineage.

So the boy came to the dawn of manhood, when his high spirits and daring nature made him restless, and he yearned to go forth into the world in quest of adventure.

At this time the Sultan of Harran was much harassed by foes who invaded his kingdom from all directions ; and Codadad greatly desired to aid his father in ridding himself of these uninvited guests.

He begged his mother and King Samir to give him leave to go to Harran ; but they would by no means be persuaded, saying, " Had thy father desired thy help, he would have sent for thee."

But Codadad was bent on winning his sire's esteem, and knew no peace until Firuzah gave him permission to ride away secretly, knowing that Samir would thwart his design.

He came at last to Harran-city, and, on a day when the Sultan gave audience to the townsfolk, made his obeisance before his father, and requested of him a position where he could win honour and glory.

He did not disclose his parentage nor whence he came, but the Sultan regarded the handsome

and courtly youth with favour and gave him a command in the army.

Codadad's strength, skill, and prowess were such that he speedily rose to be Chief Commandant of the Forces, and he soon rid the country of all the invaders ; for none could stand against his well-drilled troops.

Everyone, from the Sultan to the meanest slave of the harem, loved and honoured the brave and chivalrous youth, and the heart of the Monarch went out to the stranger who had served him so loyally. As a mark of his esteem, he placed the guardianship of the forty-and-nine Princes in Codadad's hands, which pleased everybody save the Princes themselves. They became daily more angry and jealous of the Sultan's favourite, until they grew to hate him with a bitter hatred.

"Let us lure him to a lonely spot and kill him," suggested one of the Princes to his brothers.

"Not so," objected another, "we might be found out ; rather let us bring the fellow into disgrace, so that he is expelled the country."

This plan pleased them vastly, and they put their heads together to devise a means of carrying out their design. This they soon settled, by

arranging to lose themselves whilst under Codadad's care. Accordingly they went to Codadad, and craved permission to go a-hunting, and, this being granted, rode off hot-foot. Away they went over the borders of the kingdom, intending to hide in a distant city where none would find them.

Three days passed, and as the Princes did not return from the chase, the Sultan becoming anxious sent in all directions in search of them. But whither-so-ever they had gone or what had befallen them no one could discover.

The Sultan, torn with grief, turned against his whilom favourite, and upbraided him for neglecting to care for his charges, and betraying the trust he had reposed in him.

"Go," said he, "and search for them and bring them safely back, else thou payest thy negligence with thy life." Codadad needed no second bidding; but though he rode far and wide he found no trace of the missing Princes.

For many days he wandered thus, until he came to a great prairie in the centre of which uprose a large palace. As he rode slowly past this edifice he observed a beautiful lady at one of the windows; she appeared to be distraught, for her robe was torn, her hair dishevelled, and great tears rolled down her pale cheeks.

When she saw Codadad she called to him, "O Youth, tarry not here, for this is the dwelling-place of a man-eating monster who preyeth on all who come within his reach."

But Codadad knew not fear. "O my Lady," he said, "is there any service I can do for thee? Thou seemest in great affliction."

"Alack!" replied the lady, "I must die to-night. 'Twas but yester-eve the monster caught me, and he hath sworn to take my life an I consent not to be his bride before the sun goes down, and that will I do never. I beg thee, gallant Youth, make thy escape without delay. I wot not when the wretch returneth."

Even as she spoke, the monster appeared, mounted on a Tartar steed. He was a negro of gigantic stature, hideous to behold; and as he rode along he brandished a sword so long and heavy that only such as he could wield it.

Codadad muttered a fervent prayer to Allah to protect him from this fiend, and unsheathed his scimitar, awaiting the onslaught calmly.

The giant laughed at the sight of the defiant stripling, and put out his hand to pick him up; but the latter with great address dealt him so doughty a blow on the knee, that the monster yelled with pain. Roused to a fury, he raised

himself in his stirrups and struck fiercely at his opponent with his great sword. The Prince dexterously avoided the blow, and struck the giant on the right arm with such force that the hand was severed and fell to the ground still grasping the sword.

Screaming with agony the monster rolled from his horse, and ere he could raise himself again, Codadad dismounted, and in a twinkling cut the ugly head from the writhing body.

The lady who had been watching from the casement, and supplicating Heaven at the same time, now cried joyfully that the keys of the castle were in the giant's pocket, and she begged Codadad to release her with all speed.

He found the keys, and in a trice the great gate was swung open, creaking on its hinges, and the captive came hastily out to meet him, and would have cast herself at his feet ; but he raised her gallantly with a respectful salaam, and led her to within the palace.

“ Whence comest thou, fair lady, and what is thy name ? ” he enquired, seating himself beside her. “ I am a Princess of Grand Cairo, and was journeying to Bagdad, even as I fell into the monster's clutches,” she told him, and was about to relate her history when their discourse was

interrupted by the sound of shrieks and moans and groans.

"O lady," cried Codadad, "knowest thou whence come these lamentations?"

"Methinks," said she, "those be the cries of the poor creatures that the monster hath caught and imprisoned in the dungeon beneath the castle. Each day he would choose one of these unfortunates and roast him for his supper, so when the dusk comes, they fear greatly."

"Come, let us liberate them without delay," suggested he, and they proceeded at once towards the dungeon. After unlocking the outer door they descended to a deep and darksome vault where over a hundred prisoners were chained to stakes.

The groans became louder as they approached, for in the darkness the captives thought it was the giant coming to select his evening meal.

Their deliverer hastened to reassure them. "Fear not," said he, "I have come to set you free," upon which the plaints were changed to words of thankfulness. As soon as the fetters were removed, Codadad conducted the prisoners to the courtyard. When the daylight fell upon them, nothing could exceed his joy and wonderment, for amongst the captives were his brothers,

for whom he had searched as a shepherd seeks his straying flock.

He gave thanks to Heaven, and counted them over to see that none was missing, and one and all of the forty-and-nine of them fell upon his neck, overwhelming him with praise and gratitude.

There were horses and camels in plenty in the stables, and the castle was filled with plunder, that the giant had filched from caravans and travellers, so Codadad gave each man his share, and all were soon ready to go their devious ways.

When all had departed save the lady and the Princes, the latter hastily prepared a meal, and as they sat at table, Codadad begged the lady to acquaint them with her story; whereupon she related the following :—

THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCESS OF DERYABAR

“My father was King of Deryabar in the land of Egypt, and I, being his only child and heiress, was ever the object of his tenderest solicitude.

When I became old enough to marry, my sire arranged that a young Prince, whom he had adopted out of charity, should be my consort. The good King loved and trusted this youth as

his own son ; but the base ingrate headed an insurrection, murdered my father and proclaimed himself King of Deryabar.

The assassin thought to force me into fulfilling the marriage contract which was not yet completed ; but the foresight of the Grand Vizier saved me from this terrible fate. He concealed me in the house of a friend until a vessel was hastily fitted out, wherein we embarked and sailed away to seek refuge in a distant country.

We had been but a few days at sea, when a terrific storm arose, wrecking our vessel, which broke to pieces leaving us to the mercy of the cruel sea. Everyone on board was drowned, I alone being spared to endure further misfortunes. Clinging to a plank, the waves buffeted me hither and thither, until the incoming tide left me stranded on a beach.

When I regained consciousness, I became aware of a youth of noble mien bending over me. He wore a crown of gold upon his head, and was escorted by a cavalcade of gaily accoutred soldiers.

When he had somewhat restored me, he asked how I came in such a plight on that lonely shore ; and I unfolded to him my woeful adventures. Tenderly comforting me, he bade me return with

him to the kingdom whereof he was ruler, and abide there with his mother.

The good lady received me with love and kindness, and I dwelt in her palace for many months. The King came to regard me with affection, and having persuaded me to become his wife, the nuptials were celebrated with great magnificence.

But my evil fate still pursued me, and on the very night of our marriage festivities, a neighbouring monarch made a sudden raid, and our army, being unprepared, was cut to pieces.

Under cover of the darkness my husband escaped with me, and finding a fisherman's boat on the shore, we put out to sea, letting the waves carry us whither they list.

On the third day we were overtaken by a pirate vessel, the crew of which, being armed, soon overpowered us and we were bound hand and foot and conveyed on board their boat.

The pirates tore off my veil, and my features being pleasing to them, each one desired to claim me as his property. The dispute waxed furious, words soon turned to blows, and they fought like maniacs until all were killed but one.

This pirate, who was a burly brute, looked at me and said, 'Thou shalt go to Cairo, with me,

my pretty one, where I will give thee to my friend who desires a beautiful slave.' Then noting my husband, he exclaimed, 'I have no use for this dog,' and he took up the unhappy King and cast him into the sea.

I would fain have followed my husband ; but the pirate held me back, and at last, wearying of my cries and struggles, lashed me to the mast.

He hoisted sail and reached the coast, where, procuring camels and slaves, he set out with me on the journey to Cairo. After we had travelled some distance, we were set upon by the giant who dwelt in this castle, and soon the pirate and all his slaves lay dead upon the ground.

I alone was spared and brought to the castle, and I wot not what my end had been but for thy valour, O gracious Prince."

When the Princess of Deryabar had said her say, Codadad, being greatly moved by her beauty and sad fortunes, entreated her to have no fear for the future.

Quoth he, "An thou canst bring thyself to take me for thy spouse, I will love thee truly for all time."

The lady was thankful to give herself into the safe keeping of so brave and virtuous a man, and

consented to the marriage taking place there and then.

The forty-and-nine princes were witnesses to the contract, and were loud in their expressions of good-will. At day-dawn they all set out together on the return journey to Harran.

As they travelled along in peace and amity, Codadad felt that the hour had come when he might confess the secret he had so long concealed.

“ Know ye,” said he, “ I am your brother, son of Firuzah, who fled to Samaria, and I love ye with a brother’s love.”

On hearing this the Princes feigned great delight ; but the black hearts of them were secretly filled with anger. In the stilly watches of the night they whispered to one another, “ when our sire heareth that Codadad is his son, and that he hath vanquished the giant that we in our numbers could not conquer, he will love him more even than heretofore. Haply he will appoint him sole heir, and we shall have to bend beneath his yoke.”

They rose up full of rage, and crept stealthily into the tent where Codadad and his spouse lay sleeping. Without a sound they fell upon their new-found brother, and stabbing him in every

limb, left him for dead beside the slumbering Princess.

They then proceeded to Harran, and the Sultan was overjoyed to see his errant sons again, readily forgiving them the alarm they had caused him when they said a hunting accident to one of the brothers had detained them. Never a word said they of Codadad or of aught that had befallen them.

The Princess, on awakening, lamented sore to find her consort bleeding from every limb and well-nigh dead. She hastened forth to a town in the vicinity of their halting-place to seek a surgeon, with whom she returned at once to succour the wounded man.

The tent stood as the Princess had left it, but her husband was there no longer ; though they searched right and left he was not to be found. The Princess, thinking that some wild beast had dragged him away, beat her breast and tore her hair and wept aloud. The surgeon, filled with compassion at the sight of such heart-felt sorrow, as soon as he had heard her pitiful story, offered to escort her to Harran.

They hired two dromedaries, and went upon their way, for the lady was determined to expose to the Sultan the wicked deed of the forty-and-

nine Princes, and avenge her husband's death. Arrived at Harran-city, they alighted at a caravansary to rest. The host, after the manner of his kind, entertained them with the gossip of the town and court.

“ Know ye,” quoth he, “ that the Sultan hath lost his son, one Codadad, who dwelt here many years a stranger? A right noble and valiant Prince is he; but he hath gone forth and none knoweth whither. His mother, the Lady Firuzah, hath come from Samaria, where she was long time in exile, to seek news of him and mingleth her tears with those of the Sultan, for they apprehend that some calamity hath betide their son.” Thus their host discoursed, and of other matters besides, until the surgeon rose to go on his way to seek audience of the Princess Firuzah. He had deemed it best for the Princess of Deryabar to remain concealed in the caravansary meanwhile; for he feared the malignity of the forty-and-nine wicked brothers if they discovered her in the city.

The surgeon readily gained admittance to the Lady Firuzah, and the poor mother listened heart-broken, whilst he recounted that which the Princess of Deryabar had related to him. The Sultan, hearing the weeping and wailing of Firuzah

and her slaves, hurried to the apartment whence came these lamentations.

The Princess Firuzah thereupon told him the evil tidings, to which he hearkened and spoke no word ; but he rose and went forth a bent and broken old man.

He hastily summoned the Grand Vizier, Hasan, and bade him arrest the Princes and cast them into the prison appointed for murderers, and to take heed that none escaped. Returning to the mourning mother, he comforted her, and bade her prepare to receive her daughter-in-law, whom he desired to have conveyed to the palace, with all proper pomp and ceremony.

The surgeon was richly rewarded for his good services, and received a robe of honour, in addition to a bag of gold.

The Princess of Deryabar rode up to the palace on a fine white mule trapped with gold and diamonds, which had been sent from the royal stables, and behind her came cavaliers and soldiers on foot. The townsfolk cheered when they learnt that she was Codadad's bride, for the evil tidings of his death had not yet reached them.

Upon seeing the Sultan, who awaited her at the Palace door, the Princess dismounted and kissed his feet, in token of respect and veneration. She

was tenderly raised by her father-in-law who himself conducted her to the Princess Firuzah's apartment, where they all wept together for the dead Prince.

The Princess of Deryabar was assigned a fine residence in the Palace, and aided the Sultan in superintending the construction of a magnificent marble mausoleum, beneath the dome of which a sculptured figure of Codadad was placed.

When the building was completed, the grandees and nobles as well as the populace flocked there to celebrate the funeral obsequies of the hero. Solemn processions marched through the streets, and public prayers were held in all the mosques for eight days successively ; but the ninth day was set apart for the execution of the Princes, as the Sultan had decreed that they must die thus, to expiate the crime they had committed.

The townsfolk had assembled to gaze at the scaffolds, and await the arrival of the condemned Princes.

Suddenly the eager buzz of voices was hushed, for criers were passing along the streets calling upon the citizens to arm themselves without delay.

One of the ancient foes of Harran, with a great army, had stealthily crossed the borders and would

soon be in sight of the city, which was thus completely taken by surprise. The Sultan, at the head of such troops as he could hastily collect, marched out to meet the enemy on a plain beyond the city.

The battle was long and fierce ; but at length the overpowering number of the foe surrounded the Harran troops so that there was little prospect of a single man of them escaping alive.

The last hope died in the Sultan's breast, and he glanced around him in a mute farewell to his country.

His gaze wandered across the plain, and was arrested by the sight of a large body of cavalry approaching at a pace so swift and sure that soon they were on the enemy's flanks. So furiously did the new-comers fall upon the foe, that very shortly the whole of the invading force was utterly routed, and fled pell-mell before the pursuing horsemen.

The conquering band returned from the chase, and a mighty cheer broke forth from all the Sultan's army. They cheered as though they never would stop, for at the head of the intrepid company rode none other than their beloved Codadad.

The Sultan's joy was beyond expression, when he found his saviour to be his favourite son, whom he had mourned as dead.

As they rode along together towards Harran city, Codadad was delighted to learn that his mother and wife were both there, and that the Sultan had long forgiven and forgotten the cause of his displeasure with the Princess Firuzah. Runners had brought news to the city of the victory, and Codadad's opportune return, long before the army reached the gates. The streets were thronged with joyful crowds, so that the Sultan and his son could scarce make way to the palace where Princess Firuzah and her daughter-in-law so eagerly awaited them.

When the first transports of joy were over, the Sultan cried, "O my son, relate us how it cometh to pass that our eyes are gladdened by sight of thee!"

Thereupon Codadad told them that as he lay in the tent a peasant passing by, saw that he was sorely wounded and like to die. The good man placed Codadad on his ass and took him to his cottage, where he was carefully nursed and tended until the wounds were healed.

After recompensing the peasant for his care, Codadad wended his steps to Harran. On the road he encountered the invading army, and finding that they were marching by secret ways towards Harran city, made the matter known in

the villages round about. Very soon Codadad found himself at the head of a considerable force, which arrived on the battle-field just in time to help his sire in the hour of need.

Thus they sat in pleasant converse, until the Sultan arose to leave them, saying, "Now shall all the Princes who conspired against thy life be put to death."

"O my Father," pleaded Codadad, "I pray thee spare these young men, and pardon them freely as I do, for though they merit punishment, they are my brethren and your sons."

The Sultan was much affected by this generosity, and consented after some hesitation to forgive their offence. Codadad was now proclaimed sole heir to the throne and kingdom, in the presence of all the Court and the forty-and-nine Princes whose fetters he struck off. He bore his brothers no malice, but ever loved them and treated them generously, and thus that which had begun in misery ended in joy.

All the people on hearing of the noble conduct of their hero applauded him, and loved him yet more than before, and his name and that of his consort were remembered in the land, even in the time of his children's children's children.



“THOU ART AS A FATHER TO ME ”

THE FISHERMAN AND THE GENIE

THERE was once a fisherman who had but little luck, and was often sore put about to find the wherewithal to feed himself, his wife, and his three children.

One memorable day he went down to the sea and cast his net, as was his custom ; but when he tried to haul it in, he found it so weighty that he was obliged to wade into the water before he could land it. He opened the meshes eagerly ; but in lieu of a great catch of fish, found a large brass vase securely closed by means of a leaden cap, which bore upon it

the impress of the seal of King Solomon, the son of David.

Upon examining the jar, the fisherman's disappointment gave way to surprise, "this will bring good money at the brass-bazaar," said he to himself. "It feeleth weighty, so perchance it containeth somewhat of value, it would be well to open it and look inside."

He loosened the cap and peered into the depths of the jar; but it appeared to be quite empty, and it was not until he had set it down in front of him, that he observed a thick smoke arising therefrom.

The smoke grew denser and spread and spread, trailing over land and sea and rising spirally towards the heavens. Then gradually it collected together and condensed into the form of a gigantic Genie, whose head touched the clouds whilst his feet were on earth.

The fisherman trembled for fear of the terrible creature he had liberated from the jar, and not even when the Genie called to him, "Be of good cheer, O Fisherman," did he feel reassured.

"Now, wherefore should I be of good cheer, O Genie?" he inquired; and the reply came, "Because I am going to kill thee, and then thou

wilt know neither want nor care." The fisherman's teeth chattered as he cried, "Why wouldst thou kill me? Have I done aught to deserve such treatment?" The Genie was obdurate. "I have naught to say," he answered, "save that thou mayest choose what manner of death thou wilt die."

"Verily, 'tis a poor recompense for bringing thee out of the depths of the sea and giving thee thy freedom," rejoined the trembling one.

"O Fisherman," said the Genie, "know that I am a spirit who hath disobeyed the word of Solomon the King, and I have been enclosed within that jar by his command. Moreover, he hath sealed my prison-house with his own seal and 'twas he who had me cast into the depths of the sea, where I have lain for many centuries.

"In the first hundred years of my captivity, I said in my heart, Whoso shall deliver me, him will I enrich greatly; but none came to my aid.

"In the next hundred years I thought to acquaint my liberator with all the secret treasures of the earth—and yet none came. Centuries were young and grew old, and still I stayed away down in the ocean. At last I grew

wroth and vowed that if my rescuer ever came, I would slay him as soon as I regained my freedom, and now thou knowest why thou must die."

"O Genie, have mercy," the fisherman implored; but finding his prayer availed him not, he bethought himself of an artifice whereby he might outwit the Genie who, like all his tribe, was slow of thought.

"Since there be no escape," said he, "I shall consider what will be the easiest way to die. But first I prithee satisfy my curiosity as to how thou camest here; sure am I thou wast not in that jar, which is not of a size to hold thy foot, let alone thy great body."

"None the less," replied the Genie, "I was in there even as I told thee."

"Thou liest," said the crafty one. "I could not credit such a tale unless I proved it with mine own eyes."

"See for thyself, thou unbeliever," raged the Genie as he transformed himself into a vapour, which collecting entered the jar little by little until all had disappeared within.

In a trice the fisherman had clapped down the leaden cover, and the power of Solomon's seal upon it was such that the Genie could not push it open.

“Now can I tell thee what death *thou* wilt die,” mocked the fisherman. “No choice is thine, for back into the sea goest thou, and there canst thou stay till the crack of doom.” The Genie, on finding himself duped, became all at once very humble. “O good Fisherman,” said he, “let me out, I did but jest with thee, and would not harm thee if I could ;” but the other would not be beguiled.

“Let me out and I will make thee rich,” pleaded the prisoner.

“Nay,” said the fisherman, “an I trusted thee, thou wouldst assuredly treat me as King Yunan treated Douban the Physician.”

“What story is that ? ” the Genie inquired.

“Listen,” answered the fisherman, and related the following tale, somewhat in this wise :—

THE HISTORY OF THE GREEK KING AND DOUBAN THE PHYSICIAN.

Yunan, King of Greece, ruled over great territories and possessed vast riches, and had all the heart of man could desire, until he became stricken with a leprosy. Physician after physician was called in ; all manner of decoctions, unguents, powders and draughts were tried in vain, nothing could cure the terrible

malady. The King was in despair, for what availed him riches and honours now ?

On a day a clever physician named Douban arrived at the court and undertook to cure the King without draught or ointment.

The King, delighted at such a prospect, promised a most rich reward to the physician, if he proved as good as his word.

Douban then presented His Majesty with a bat, in the hollow handle of which he had inserted certain potent drugs. He requested the King to use this bat when he rode forth to play at "pall and mall." "O auspicious One," said he, "drive the ball right vigorously, so that thy palm grows moist and permits the medicine, within the bat, to permeate thy body. Afterwards make thy ablution in the Hammam-bath, and then, resting awhile, thou wilt arise from thy couch free from thy disease."

The King followed Douban's directions, and it came to pass that he was healed, as the wise man had foretold. From that hour the King delighted to honour the physician, bestowing great riches upon him and keeping him ever close to his side.

These favours awoke the jealousy of the Grand Vizier, as envious and evil-minded a man

as one could find anywhere in the Kingdom. He determined to accomplish the downfall of the physician, so little by little he sowed suspicious thoughts in the mind of the Monarch. "I fear for thy life, O King," he whispered; "how knowest thou but that this stranger, who cometh from beyond the borders, be not a traitor sent to take thy life?"

These words made King Yunan uneasy; but he replied, "Nay, thou art mistaken, for hath he not cured my malady, so wherefore should he now seek to harm me?"

"O King of the Age," said the Vizier, "I would accuse no man unjustly, I speak only in zeal for thy welfare."

As continual dropping will wear away a stone, so the subtle words of this evil adviser fell on the heart of the King, and at length he cried to the Vizier, "What shall I do?"

Quoth the Minister, "Summon the physician, and when he cometh into the Presence, do him to death, for 'tis better that thou shouldst slay him than he thee."

The King sent for Douban and telling him his last hour had come, bade him make ready for the executioner who waited beside the throne.

"O King, wherein have I sinned?"

demanded Douban, greatly perturbed at this unexpected reception. Said the King, "It hath come to my knowledge that thou art a traitor, so I would slay thee ere thou canst slay me."

Douban protested and swore, by all he held sacred, to his loyalty and affection for the Sovereign, whose life he had saved; but the King was not to be turned from his fell purpose.

"If thou spare me, thou wilt be spared also; but slay me and thou too shalt be slain," threatened Douban; "but since thou decreest that I must die, O King, grant, at least, a reprieve to permit me to arrange my funeral and put my affairs in order."

Douban's request being granted, he returned to his house, strongly guarded, to make his last dispositions and take leave of his family.

When his time of grace had expired, and he was ushered into the King's presence, he prostrated himself before the throne and then rising presented Yunan with a shabby old volume. "O King," said he, "I bring thee here a gift, a book so rare that it is meet thou shouldst possess it. Guard it in thy treasury, for never canst thou have another like it."

"Indeed," replied the monarch. "What is in the book that maketh it so precious?"

“It containeth many secrets, and one of them is upon the third line on the sixth leaf; an thou wilt read this one as soon as my head is cut off, I shall reply to any question thou putttest to me.”

Yunan was charmed to possess such a novelty, and ordered the executioner to make ready quickly, so that he might put some questions without delay.

“One word more,” cried Douban, handing a packet to the King, “here I give thee a powder, spread it on a tray and place my head upon it, and the blood will cease to flow; then is the time to ask thy questions. Yet I implore thee, for thy sake as well as mine, take not away my life; I am no traitor to thee.”

“Enough,” said the King, “I would slay thee willingly had I no other reason than to hear thee speak after thou art dead.”

The King made a sign, and with one blow the executioner struck off Douban’s head; then lifting it up he placed it on the tray upon which the powder had been sprinkled. Immediately the blood stopped running and the physician opened his mouth and said, “Find the page, O King!”

Yunan opened the book, and, finding the leaves stuck together, moistened his finger in

his mouth to turn them the more readily. Each leaf had to be turned singly in order to find the sixth page, but at length he reached it ; to his surprise it was quite blank. " O Head, there is no writing here," declared the disappointed monarch.

" Turn over a few more leaves," said the head ; and the King went on turning over, always moistening his finger in his mouth, until suddenly he commenced to feel exceedingly ill. As he fell to the ground convulsed with pain, the head called out, " O King, thou meetest just retribution for returning evil for good the book is poisoned. Hadst thou spared me thou also wouldst have been spared ; but I am dead and thou shalt die too." The head spoke no more, nor would King Yunan have heeded if it had done so, for he lay dead before his throne.

The story being finished, the fisherman said, " O Genie, hadst thou been willing to spare my life I would have spared thine ; but like King Yunan, thou wert ready to smite him who aided thee. Therefore back into the sea shalt thou go."

The Genie begged and implored to be set free, promising the fisherman not only safety, but riches and honours to boot. This offer

greatly tempted the poor man, but he did not venture to release the captive before he had exacted from him a solemn vow, taken in the name of Allah, that his pledge would be faithfully observed. When the leaden cover was removed, smoke issued forth and shaped itself into the Genie, as on the previous occasion. No sooner had his feet touched the ground than he gave a mighty kick which sent the jar far out to sea. The fisherman's heart went pit-a-pat and his knees knocked together, for he was alarmed lest he might be made to follow the jar. The Genie laughed at him and cried, "Fear not, O pusillanimous One, but take thy net and follow me." The other did as he was bid, albeit he was still full of apprehension. On they went, away to the uncultivated land beyond the city, and thence across a vast plain to a mountain tarn between four hills. "Follow me," again cried the Genie, "and cast thy net." Together they wended their way to the middle of the lake, where fish of four different colours, red, yellow, white and blue, disported themselves. The net was cast there, and on being hauled in the fisherman found that it held four fish, red, yellow, white and blue, all gleaming brightly in the sunshine.

“The Sultan will pay well for these,” quoth the Genie, “carry them to him, and come once on each day to fish here; then wilt thou soon be a rich man.”

With a word of farewell the Genie struck his foot on the ground, which opened wide at that moment, and permitted him to disappear within the fissure. The fisherman made his way back to the city, and lost no time in taking his fish to the Palace; and the Sultan was graciously pleased to accept the gift. He commented upon the unusual colours of the fish and their fine appearance, and ordered the Vizier to give the donor a purse of gold.

The fisherman went home rejoicing, never had he thought to possess so much money, and he intended to spend it wisely.

Meanwhile the Grand Vizier had carried the fish to the kitchen, to be cooked for the Sultan’s dinner.

A new cook had just entered the royal service, and she was eager to display her skill, so she cleaned and prepared the fish with great care, and put them in the frying-pan. First she did them to a nicety on one side, basting them well with oil; and she was just about to turn them over, when the kitchen wall opened,

and a gorgeously arrayed lady appeared in the aperture. She heeded not the trembling cook, but advanced to the fireplace and struck the fish with a myrtle rod, crying, "O Fish, O Fish, be ye doing as I wish?" With one accord the fish raised themselves in the pan and said, "Yes, yes, an thou keepest true, thou shalt not rue, if thou art content, we make no comment." After this the lady overturned the frying-pan, and went away as she had come.

The cook was so upset at these happenings that she swooned upon the floor, and she still lay there when the Vizier came in. Shoving her with his foot he shouted, "O Woman, get up, the Sultan awaits his fish." This roused the poor creature, and she related as well as her sobs would permit, what had taken place, and showed the fish all burnt to a cinder.

"Keep a silent tongue in thy head, O Cook," advised the Vizier; and with that he went to the Sultan and made some excuse about the fish which satisfied the Monarch, who requested him to procure some similar ones on the morrow.

The Vizier sent for the fisherman, who undertook to supply some more the next day, and off he went to the tarn between the four mountains. He returned in due time with the four

fish, and took them to the Vizier, who in turn handed them to the cook; but this time he remained in the kitchen to watch them being fried. No sooner were the fish well browned on the one side, and the cook about to turn them over, than the wall opened again, and everything happened just the same as it had on the day previous.

“The sooner the Sultan is informed of this the better,” thought the Vizier, and off he went to pour his story into the royal ear, whereat the Sultan marvelled greatly, and said, “I must see this for myself, O Vizier. Procure some more of the fish to-morrow.”

The fisherman arrived betimes at the Palace, with his catch, and received as his guerdon another purse of gold, so that he and his family would be enabled to spend the rest of their days in affluence.

The Sultan ordered the fish to be brought to his chamber, and commanded the Vizier to fry them in his presence. The Minister was not a skilful cook, but he succeeded in getting them fairly brown on one side, and was about to turn them, when the wall opened, and out bounced a great ugly blackamoor. He bore a green branch in his hand, and striking the

fish with it, shouted, "O Fish, O Fish, be ye doing as I wish?" The fish stood upon their little tails and replied, "Yes, yes, an thou keepest true, thou shalt not rue, if thou art content, we make no comment." Then the blackamoor upset the frying-pan, and went through the hole in the wall, which closed up immediately.

The fish were burnt as black as the negro's face, and as the Sultan inspected them ruefully, he said, "Verily to this riddle we must find a key."

He sent for the fisherman, and was astonished to learn of the existence of four mountains and a lake, which were quite unknown to any one in court or city, in spite of their being within an hour's march of the town.

The Sultan lost no time in setting out to view this unknown spot. With the fisherman as guide, the nobles and guards followed the monarch, till they reached the mountain tarn wherein the fish, red, yellow, white and blue, disported themselves.

When all had expressed their wonderment at the sight, the Sultan gave orders that his retinue should encamp on the shores of the lake, and he then retired to his tent.

At nightfall he held counsel with his Vizier,

for he disliked the business of the talking fish, the lady and the blackamoor, and the sudden appearance of mountains and lake where none had ever been before.

“To-night,” said the Sultan, “I go forth alone, to seek the key of this riddle ; stay thou here, O Vizier, and say that I am indisposed and will see no one, neither emirs, ministers, nabobs, chamberlains nor courtiers, and let none guess at my absence.”

The Vizier endeavoured to dissuade the Sultan from carrying out his hazardous design ; but he was deaf to all argument and left the camp secretly and alone, under cover of darkness.

He walked on for many leagues, and at length came to a solitary palace standing in the midst of a plain.

The great doors stood ajar, and as there came no response to his repeated knocking, the Sultan made bold to enter uninvited. He passed through the great hall, crying, “Hallo there,” as loudly as he could ; but none answered. From room to room he went, lost in admiration of the splendid furniture, hangings and carpets which filled them, each one more magnificent than the last.

Choice flowers bloomed in the gardens, and rare birds flew amongst the trees which were covered with golden nets, so that the songsters could not escape.

In the great hall stood a fountain with a golden lion at each corner, and from their mouths ran a constant stream of water which seemed to break into diamonds and pearls as it fell. Above was a great striped canopy of crimson and gold, and the fringe that fell therefrom was made of strings of precious stones.

The Sultan viewed these splendours with delight, and then being weary, sat down to rest. Presently he became aware of a melancholy wailing, which seemed to proceed from the side of the building that he had not yet visited. He at once advanced in the direction of the sound, and found himself before a door concealed by heavy silken hangings. He drew these aside and entered a room, the centre of which was occupied by a handsome young man seated on a dais. He was clad in silken garments, and bore a crown of pearls upon his head; but the expression of his countenance betokened extreme sorrow.

The Sultan advanced and saluted the seated figure; his greeting was returned courteously,

and the young man said, "O Stranger, pardon that I rise not to receive thee, in the manner that befits thy apparent rank and station."

"Whatever be thy reason, thou art excused, O Youth," returned the Sultan. "I have intruded here, seeking to solve the riddle of the four mountains and the lake with its fishes, red, yellow, white and blue. I also would fain know how thy palace came here in this desert spot, and why I see thee all alone and unhappy."

The young man made no reply to this; but burst into a flood of tears, and raising his silken robe, disclosed to the wondering eyes of the Sultan that his lower half was a block of stone.

The Monarch, greatly concerned to see so sad a sight, entreated the young man to acquaint him with the cause of his affliction; whereupon the latter narrated the following.

TALE OF THE ENCHANTED PRINCE.

"Know, O Stranger, that the four mountains and the lake, whereof thou hast made mention, were at one time the Capital of the kingdom of the Black Islands, and my father Mahmoud was the king. When his earthly course was run, I wedded my cousin and reigned in his stead. For five years I dwelt in peace

and amity with my consort ; but after that time I marked in her demeanour a growing coldness and lack of affection for me. One day as I lay upon a couch, I called two female slaves to sit beside me, with their fans, to ward off the flies and temper the heat of the day. Thinking I slumbered, they presently began to whisper to one another, and from their conversation I learnt, to my horror, that the Queen, my consort, was commonly known to be a sorceress.

Upon my reproaching my wife for being in league with the Evil One, she turned upon me in a fury of anger, and uttering a magic spell, cried, " O perfidious One, I command thee to become half stone." Nor hath she been content with this cruel revenge upon one who had never done her ill ; but she must needs bewitch my beautiful Capital, turning the city into the barren mountains, and the lake thou wottest of, and transforming its multitude of people into fish.

The white fish were the Moslems, the red, Persians, the blue, Christians, and the yellow, Jews, each according with the colours of the turbans by which the different sects were distinguished.

Every day the sorceress returneth here and wreaketh her spite by lashing me with a whip,

until the blood cometh down my shoulders ; and so my sorrow passeth all endurance."

Quoth the Sultan, upon hearing this sorrowful tale, " O Prince, be of good courage, for never will I leave thee till I have found a means to liberate thee from the toils of this witch."

After long discussing of this and that, the Sultan decided to conceal himself in the chamber and await the coming of the sorceress. Presently the woman entered and commenced to belabour her husband, who, being unable to move, had to endure this treatment as best he could.

The Sultan sprang forth from his hiding-place with drawn scimitar, and by a counter-spell known to him, forced the witch to pronounce a charm over a vessel of water, which forthwith undid all her wicked enchantments.

Immediately the words were spoken the Prince resumed his natural form, and was able to rise from the dais where he had so long been seated. At the same time the mountains and lake once more became a great and populous city, with its former denizens decked in their gaily coloured turbans.

Fearing that the sorceress meditated some further wickedness, the Sultan, with one stroke of his scimitar, cut her in twain.

The Monarch and the Prince now embraced one another, and the latter scarce knew how to express the gratitude he entertained for his deliverer, "Fain would I follow thee to the ends of the earth," he cried, "for thou art as a father to me."

The Sultan, who had no children, rejoiced to hear these words. "Come with me and be my son, together we shall dwell in my kingdom which is hard by," said he.

The Prince gazed at him in wonder. "O King of Kings," he rejoined, "thy kingdom is a whole year's march from here, it only appeared so near because of the enchantment. But, even so, I am prepared to go with thee and be thy son, to comfort and solace thee in thine old age."

Hasty preparations were made for the departure, and the Prince, calling his ministers together, left the kingdom in their charge. In ten days the Sultan and the Prince, escorted by a great train of slaves, started on their journey. The rear of the great procession was brought up by camels laden with gold and silver, and the slaves scattered largess amongst the people as they passed through the towns and villages.

For a full year did they travel thus, and then the Sultan's Capital came in sight. The good Monarch was greeted with enthusiasm by his loyal subjects, who came out in crowds to meet him and give him hearty welcome.

The Prince, having no desire to return to his own Capital where he had suffered so greatly, remained with the Sultan, who adopted him as son and heir.

The Sultan forgot not the fisherman, and summoned him to the Palace in order to requite his services.

Learning that the fisherman was ambitious for his daughters and son, and desired nothing for himself, the Monarch promoted these young people to high positions at Court. So worthily did they behave, and so assiduous were they in the duties that were entrusted to them, that soon the children of the poor fisherman were esteemed by all who knew them.

One happy day the Sultan himself espoused the elder daughter, and the younger one he gave to the Prince to wife. So the fisherman became not only a man of wealth, but also the grandfather of many little Princes and Princesses ; and he lived in joy and contentment for the remainder of his life.

PRINCE AGIB

My name is Agib. I am the son of a Sultan. After his death I resolved to make some discoveries beyond my own territories ; to which end I caused ten ships to be fitted out, embarked, and set sail.

Our voyage was very pleasant for forty days successively ; but on the forty-first night the wind became so boisterous that the pilot, beating his breast, cried, “ O sir, we are all lost. The tempest has brought us so far out of our course, that to-morrow about noon we shall be near the black mountain, or mine of adamant, which at this very minute draws all your fleet towards it by virtue of the iron in your ships ; and when we approach within a certain distance, the attraction of the adamant will have such force, that all the nails will be drawn out of the sides and bottoms of the ships, and fasten to the mountain, so that your vessels will fall to pieces and sink. This mountain,” continued the pilot, “ is inaccessible. On the summit there is a dome of fine brass, supported by pillars of the same metal, and on the top of that dome stands a horse,

likewise of brass, with a rider on his back, who has a plate of lead fixed to his breast, upon which some talismanic characters are engraven. Sir, the tradition is, that this statue is the chief cause why so many ships and men have been lost and sunk in this place, and that it will ever continue to be fatal to all those who have the misfortune to approach, until it shall be thrown down."

The next morning we distinctly perceived the black mountain, and we found what the pilot had foretold to be true. All my people were drowned, but my good fortune brought me to a landing-place where there were steps that led up to the summit of the mountain.

At last I reached the top, without accident. I went into the dome, and kneeling on the ground, gave God thanks for His mercies.

I passed the night under the dome. In my sleep an old, grave man appeared to me and said, "Hearken, Agib ; as soon as thou art awake dig up the ground under thy feet : thou wilt find a bow of brass and three arrows of lead. Shoot the three arrows at the statue, and the rider and his horse will fall into the sea ; this being done, the sea will swell and rise to the foot of the dome. When it has come so high, thou wilt perceive a boat with one man holding an oar in each hand ;

this man is also of metal, but different from that thou hast thrown down ; step on board, but without mentioning the name of God, and he will in ten days' time bring thee into another sea, where thou shalt find an opportunity to return to thy country, provided, as I have told thee, thou dost not mention the name of God during the whole voyage."

When I awoke I took the bow and arrows out of the ground, shot at the horseman, and with the third arrow I overthrew him and the horse. In the meantime, the sea swelled and rose up by degrees. When it came as high as the foot of the dome upon the top of the mountain, I saw, afar off, a boat rowing towards me, and I returned God thanks.

When the boat made land, I stepped aboard, and the man of metal rowed without ceasing till I saw some islands, which gave me hopes that I should escape all the danger that I feared. The excess of my joy made me forget what I was forbidden : " God is great, God be praised ! " said I.

I had no sooner spoken than the boat and man sank, casting me upon the sea. I swam until night, when, as my strength began to fail, a wave vast as a mountain threw me on the land.

On the next morning, I found I was upon a desert, though a very pleasant island, abounding with trees and wild shrubs bearing fruit. I recommended myself to God, and prayed Him to dispose of me according to His will. Immediately after, I saw a vessel coming towards the island. I got up into a very thick tree, from whence, though unseen, I might safely view it. The vessel came into a little creek, where ten slaves landed and went towards the middle of the island, where they dug for a considerable time, after which they lifted up a trap-door.

I saw them once more go to the ship, and return soon after with an old man, who led in his hand a handsome lad of about fifteen years of age. They all descended when the trap-door had been opened. After they had again come up, the old man and the slaves went on board, and steered their course towards the mainland. When I perceived they had proceeded to such a distance that I could not be seen by them, I came down from the tree, and went directly to the place where I had seen the ground broken. I removed the earth by degrees, till I came to a stone, two or three feet square. I lifted it up, and found that it covered the head of a flight of stairs, also of stone. I descended, and at the



PRINCE AGIB IN THE PRINCESSES' PALACE

bottom found myself in a large room, brilliantly lighted, and furnished with a carpet, a couch covered with tapestry, and cushions of rich stuff, upon which the young man sat. The young man, when he perceived me, was considerably alarmed; but I made a low obeisance, and said to him, "Sir, do not fear. I am a King, and I will do you no harm. On the contrary, it is probable that your good destiny may have brought me hither to deliver you out of this tomb, where it seems you have been buried alive."

The young man, much assured at these words, with a smiling countenance requested me to seat myself by him. As soon as I was seated, he said, "Prince, my story will surprise you. My father, who had observed the very moment of my birth, consulted astrologers about my nativity, and was answered, 'Your son shall live happily till the age of fifteen, when his life will be exposed to a danger which he will hardly be able to escape. But if his good destiny preserve him beyond that time, he will live to a great age. It will be,' said they, 'when the statue of brass that stands upon the summit of the mountain of adamant, shall be thrown into the sea by Prince Agib, and, as the stars prognosticate, your son will be killed fifty days afterwards by that prince.'

“My father had notice given him yesterday that the statue of brass had been thrown into the sea about ten days ago, and therefore he came hastily hither to conceal me, and promised at the end of forty days to return and fetch me away. For my own part, I am sanguine in my hopes, and cannot believe that Prince Agib will seek for me in a place underground, in the midst of a desert island.”

I took care not to inform him I was the very Agib whom he dreaded, lest I should alarm his fears. I found the young man of ready wit, and partook with him of his provisions, of which he had enough to have lasted beyond the forty days, though he had had more guests than myself. In short, we spent thirty-nine days in the pleasantest manner possible in this subterranean abode.

The fortieth day appeared ; and in the morning, when the young man awoke, he said to me, with a transport of joy that he could not restrain, “Prince, this is the fortieth day, and I am not dead, thanks to God and your good company. My father will not fail to make you, very shortly, every acknowledgment of his gratitude for your attentions, and will furnish you with every necessary for your return to your kingdom. But,” continued he, “while we are waiting his

arrival, dear prince, pray do me the favour to fetch me a melon and some sugar, that I may eat some to refresh me."

Out of several melons that remained I took the best, and laid it on a plate ; and as I could not find a knife to cut it with, I asked the young man if he knew where there was one. " There is one," said he, " upon this cornice over my head." I accordingly saw it there, and made so much haste to reach it, that, while I had it in my hand, my foot being entangled in the carpet, I fell most unhappily upon the young man, and the knife pierced his heart.

At this spectacle I threw myself on the ground with unspeakable sorrow and grief. I would have embraced death without any reluctance, had it presented itself to me. Nevertheless, considering that all my tears and sorrows would not restore the young man to life, and the forty days being expired, I might be surprised by his father, I quitted the subterranean dwelling, laid down the great stone upon the entrance, and covered it with earth. I again ascended into the tree which had previously sheltered me, when I saw the expected vessel approaching the shore.

The old man with his slaves landed immediately ; they lifted up the stone, and descended the

stairs, and found the young man stretched on his couch, with the knife through his heart, for I had not had the courage to draw it out. On seeing this, they uttered such lamentable cries, that my tears flowed afresh. The slaves brought up the son's body, dressed in his best apparel, and when they had made a grave they buried it. The old man, supported by two slaves, and his face covered with tears, threw the first earth upon the body, after which the slaves filled up the grave.

After the old man and his slaves were gone, I was left alone upon the island. I lay that night in the subterranean dwelling, which they had shut up, and when the day came, I walked round the island.

I led this wearisome life for a whole month. At the expiration of this time I perceived that the sea sank so low, that there remained between me and the continent but a small stream, which I crossed, and the water did not reach above the middle of my leg. At last I got upon more firm ground ; and when I had proceeded some distance from the sea, I saw a good way before me something that resembled a great fire, which afforded me some comfort ; for I said to myself, I shall here find some persons, it not being possible that this fire should kindle of itself. As I drew nearer,

however, I found my error, and discovered that what I had taken for a fire was a castle of red copper, which the beams of the sun made to appear at a distance like flames. As I wondered at this magnificent building, I saw ten handsome young men coming along ; but what surprised me was that they were all blind of the right eye.

As I was conjecturing by what adventure these men could come together, they approached, and seemed glad to see me. After we had made our salutations, they inquired what had brought me thither. I told them my story, which filled them with great astonishment.

After I had concluded my account, the young men prayed me to accompany them into the palace, and brought me into a spacious hall, where there were ten small blue sofas set round, separate from one another. In the middle of this circle stood an eleventh sofa, not so high as the rest, but of the same colour, upon which an old man sat down, and the young men occupied the other ten. But as each sofa could only contain one man, one of the young men said to me, " Sit down, friend, upon that carpet in the middle of the room, and do not inquire into anything that concerns us, nor the reason why we are all blind of the right eye ; restrain your curiosity or it will

cost you the loss of your right eye.” “No matter,” I replied; “be assured that if such a misfortune befall me, I will not impute it to you, but to myself.”

The young man further represented to me, that if I lost an eye, I must not hope to remain with them, because their number was complete, and no addition could be made to it; but I begged them, let it cost what it would, to tell me the reason of their one-eyed condition.

The ten young men, perceiving that I was fixed in my resolution, took a sheep, killed it, and after they had taken off the skin, presented me with a knife, telling me it would be useful to me on an occasion, which they would soon explain. “We must sew you in this skin,” said they, “and then leave you; upon which a bird of a monstrous size, called a roc, will appear in the air, and taking you for a sheep, will pounce upon you and soar with you to the sky. But let not that alarm you; he will descend with you again, and lay you on the top of a mountain. When you find yourself on the ground, cut the skin with your knife, and throw it off. As soon as the roc sees you, he will fly away for fear, and leave you at liberty. Do not stay, but walk on till you come to a spacious palace, covered with

plates of gold, large emeralds, and other precious stones. Go up to the gate, which always stands open, and walk in. We have each of us been in that castle, but will tell you nothing of what we saw, or what befell us there ; you will learn by your own experience. All that we can inform you is, that it has cost each of us our right eye ; and this penance we are obliged to suffer in consequence of having been there ; but we cannot explain ourselves further."

When the young man had thus spoken, I wrapped myself in the sheep's skin, holding fast the knife which was given me ; and after the young men had been at the trouble to sew the skin about me, they retired into the hall, and left me alone. The roc they spoke of soon arrived ; he pounced upon me, took me in his talons like a sheep, and carried me up to the summit of the mountain.

When I found myself on the ground, I cut the skin with the knife, and throwing it off, the roc at the sight of me flew away.

Being impatient to reach the palace, I lost no time, but made so much haste, that I got thither in half a day's journey.

The gate being open, I entered a square court, so large that there were round it ninety-nine gates of wood of sandal and aloes, and one of gold,

without reckoning those of several superb staircases that led to apartments above, besides many more which I could not see.

I saw a door standing open just before me, through which I entered into a large hall. Here I found forty young women, of such perfect beauty as imagination could not surpass; they were all most sumptuously apparelled. As soon as they saw me they arose, and without waiting my salutations, said to me, with tones of joy, "Welcome! welcome! We have long expected you. You are at present our lord, master, and judge, and we are your slaves, ready to obey your commands."

After these words were spoken, these ladies vied with each other in their eager solicitude to do me all possible service. One brought hot water to wash my feet; a second poured sweet-scented water on my hands; others brought me all kinds of necessaries, and change of apparel; others again brought in a magnificent collation; and the rest came with glasses in their hands, to fill me delicious wines, all in good order, and in the most charming manner possible. Some of the ladies brought in musical instruments, and sang most delightful songs; while others danced before me, two and two, with admirable grace.

I passed a whole year of most pleasurable life with these forty ladies. At the end of that time, I was greatly surprised to see these ladies with great sorrow impressed upon their countenances, and to hear them all say, "Adieu, dear Prince, adieu ! for we must leave you." After they had spoken these words, they began to weep bitterly. "My dear ladies," said I, "have the kindness not to keep me any longer in suspense ; tell me the cause of your sorrow." "Well," said one of them, "to satisfy you, we must acquaint you that we are all Princesses, daughters of Kings. We live here together in the manner you have seen ; but at the end of every year we are obliged to be absent forty days, for reasons we are not permitted to reveal ; and afterwards we return again to this palace. Before we depart we will leave you the keys of everything, especially those of the hundred doors, where you will find enough to satisfy your curiosity, and to relieve your solitude during our absence. But we entreat you to forbear opening the golden door ; for if you do, we shall never see you again ; and the apprehension of this augments our grief." We separated with much tenderness ; and after I had embraced them all, they departed, and I remained alone in the castle.

I determined not to forget the important

advice they had given me, not to open the golden door ; but as I was permitted to satisfy my curiosity in everything else, I took the first of the keys of the other doors, which were hung in regular order.

I opened the first door, and entered an orchard, which I believe the universe could not equal. I could not imagine anything to surpass it. The symmetry, the neatness, the admirable order of the trees, the abundance and diversity of unknown fruits, their freshness and beauty, delighted me. They far exceeded in size the ordinary fruits in our gardens. I shut the door, and opened the next.

Instead of an orchard, I found here a flower-garden, which was no less extraordinary in its kind. The roses, jessamines, violets, daffodils, hyacinths, anemones, tulips, pinks, lilies, and an infinite number of flowers, which do not grow in other places but at certain times, were there flourishing all at once ; and nothing could be more delicious than the fragrant smell which they emitted.

I opened the third door, and found a large aviary, paved with marble of several fine and uncommon colours. The trellis-work was made of sandal-wood and wood of aloes. It contained a vast number of nightingales, goldfinches,

canary-birds, larks, and other rare singing birds, and the vessels that held their seed were of the most sparkling jasper or agate. The sun went down, and I retired charmed with the chirping notes of the multitude of birds, who then began to perch upon such places as suited them for repose during the night. I went to my chamber, resolving on the following days to open all the rest of the doors, excepting that of gold.

The next day I opened the fourth door. I entered a large court, surrounded with forty gates, all open, and through each of them was an entrance into a treasury. The first was stored with heaps of pearls ; and, what is almost incredible, the number of those stones which are most precious, and as large as pigeon's eggs, exceeded the number of those of the ordinary size. In the second treasury, there were diamonds, carbuncles, and rubies ; in the third, emeralds ; in the fourth, ingots of gold ; in the fifth, money : in the sixth, ingots of silver ; and in the two following, money. The rest contained amethysts, chrysolites, topazes, opals, turquoises, agate, jasper, cornelian, and coral, of which there was a storehouse filled, not only with branches, but whole trees.

Thus I went through, day by day, these

various wonders. Thirty-nine days afforded me but just as much time as was necessary to open ninety-nine doors, and to admire all that presented itself to my view, so that there was only the hundredth door left, which I was forbidden to open.

The fortieth day after the departure of those charming Princesses arrived, and had I but retained so much self-command as I ought to have had, I should have been this day the happiest of all mankind, whereas now I am the most unfortunate. But through my weakness, which I shall ever repent, and the temptations of an evil spirit, I opened that fatal door ! Then before I had moved my foot to enter, a smell pleasant enough, but too powerful for my senses, made me faint away. However, I soon recovered, and instead of taking warning from this incident to close the door and restrain my curiosity, I entered, and found myself in a spacious vaulted apartment, illuminated by several large tapers placed in candlesticks of solid gold.

Among the many objects that attracted my attention was a black horse, of the most perfect symmetry and beauty. I approached in order the better to observe him, and found he had on a saddle and bridle of massive gold, curiously

wrought. One part of his manger was filled with clean barley, and the other with rose water. I laid hold of his bridle, and led him out to view him by daylight. I mounted, and endeavoured to make him move ; but finding he did not stir, I struck him with a switch I had taken up in his magnificent stable. He had no sooner felt the whip, than he began to neigh in a most horrible manner, and extending wings, which I had not before perceived, flew up with me into the air. My thoughts were fully occupied in keeping my seat ; and, considering the fear that had seized me, I sat well. At length he directed his course towards the earth, and lighting upon the terrace of a palace, and, without giving me time to dismount, shook me out of the saddle with such force, as to throw me behind him, and with the end of his tail he struck out my eye.

Thus it was I became blind of one eye. I then recollected the predictions of the ten young gentlemen. The horse again took wing, and soon disappeared. I got up, much vexed at the misfortune I had brought upon myself. I walked upon the terrace, covering my eye with one of my hands, for it pained me exceedingly, and then descended, and entered into a hall. I soon discovered by the ten sofas in a circle and the eleventh

in the middle, lower than the rest, that I was in the castle whence I had been carried by the roc.

The ten young men seemed not at all surprised to see me, nor at the loss of my eye ; but said, " We are sorry that we cannot congratulate you on your return, as we could wish ; but we are not the cause of your misfortune." " I should do you wrong," I replied, " to lay it to your charge ; I have only myself to accuse." " If," said they, " it be a subject of consolation to the afflicted to know that others share their sufferings, you have in us this alleviation of your misfortune. All that has happened to you we have also endured ; we each of us tasted the same pleasures during a year ; and we had still continued to enjoy them, had we not opened the golden door, when the Princesses were absent. You have been no wiser than we, and have incurred the same punishment. We would gladly receive you into our company, but we have already stated to you the reasons that render this impossible ; depart, therefore, and proceed to the court of Bagdad, where you will meet with the person who is to decide your destiny." After they had explained to me the road I was to travel, I departed.

